

Harper's

MAGAZINE

NOVEMBER 1954

FIFTY CENTS

MERRIAM OF CHICAGO

Joseph N. Bell

THE CHANGING PAST

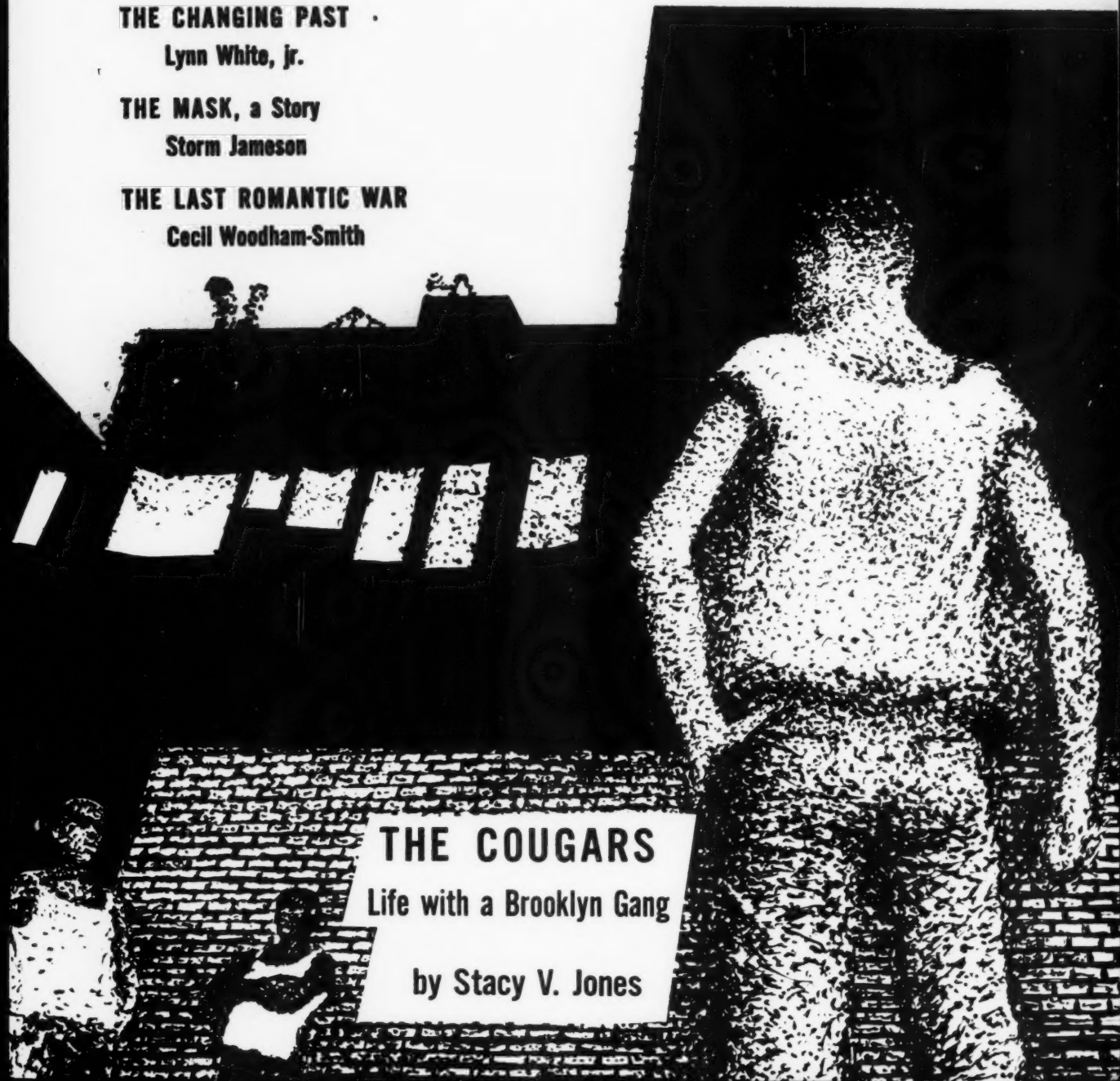
Lynn White, jr.

THE MASK, a Story

Storm Jameson

THE LAST ROMANTIC WAR

Cecil Woodham-Smith



THE COUGARS

Life with a Brooklyn Gang

by Stacy V. Jones

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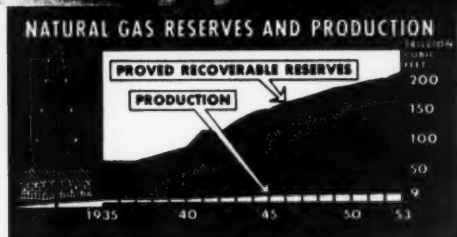
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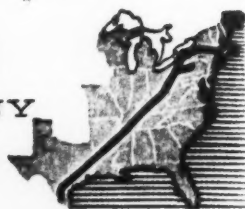
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Harper's MAGAZINE

Vol. 209

NOVEMBER 1954

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"When you have to kill a man it costs nothing to be polite"



It was the evening of December 7, 1941, in London. Churchill was relaxing at a table with his American friends, Ambassador Winant and Averell Harriman. When he turned on his wireless set for a regular news broadcast he heard something said about Japan attacking American territory. He at once put in a call to the White House.

"In two or three minutes Mr. Roosevelt came through. 'Mr. President, what's this about Japan?' 'It's quite true,' the President replied. 'They have attacked us at Pearl Harbor. We are all in the same boat now.'"

The very next day Churchill wrote the Japanese Ambassador to inform him that their countries were at war. He recalls that some people criticized him for the "ceremonial" style he used in his letter. "But after all," comments Churchill, "when you have to kill a man it costs nothing to be polite."

This is one of the thousands of interesting sidelights and anecdotes of the war which the famous Prime Minister reveals in his six-volume masterpiece, *The Second World War*. Some are tragic, some dramatic—all of them reveal the human and intimate side of the war leaders in their conduct of affairs.

Stalin Thought It a Joke

Among the fascinating revelations in *The Second World War* is the by-play between Churchill, Stalin and President Roosevelt, as they sat around the conference or dining table, planning, arguing, toasting, joking.

Was Stalin really pulling Churchill's leg when he proposed that after the war 50,000 of Germany's military leaders and technicians be executed? Churchill tells how he objected to the idea, saying, "I would rather be taken out into the garden here and be shot myself than sully my own country's honor by such infamy."

President Roosevelt tried to make a joke of it by offering the compromise plan that only 49,000 be shot. When Elliott Roosevelt made a speech on the subject agreeing with Stalin, Churchill left the table in a huff. He was at once followed by Stalin and Molotov, grinning and eagerly declaring they were only playing, that nothing of a serious character had entered Stalin's head.

Mr. Churchill was awarded the Nobel Prize for Literature, principally for *The Second World War*, and there can be little doubt that it will come to be regarded as one of the great landmarks of world literature.

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LETTERS

The Writer's Psyche—

To the Editors:

Cheers for Malcolm Cowley ["Psychoanalysts and Writers," September]—and some queries for Bergler.

As one who believes great (and greatly misunderstood) truth lies in psychoanalysis, I nevertheless fail to believe in the Infallibility of Analysts.

For example, Bergler's assertion that all writing is valueless, based on his assumption that all writers are neurotic, is a *non sequitur*.

It implies that personality disorder sabotages all the functions of the brain: logic, reason, detachment, imagination, etc. Were that so, there could have been no Sigmund Freud, to name just one.

Bergler's notion also implies the universality of a specific neurosis. Even scientists must write their papers. Historians write the record of man; statesmen write speeches; and businessmen write letters and reports. Mere talk is writing unrecorded. Are we all, then, preoedipal oral regressives?

Finally, how does Bergler manage to practice? How, that is, can he treat what he calls "writer's block" if, to write, the luckless author must remain neurotic?

I suggest the good doctor, before he explodes more such theory, look sharply to his own petard.

PHILIP WYLIE
Rushford, N. Y.

To the Editors:

Mr. Malcolm Cowley is to be congratulated on his article in your September issue. If any of the doctors named in Mr. Cowley's piece had ever "read" for a publication as I do, I think they would be interested to take statistics on the number of writers (by which I mean people who write, irrespective of the merit of the output) that exist. My estimate would be that four-fifths of the population writes—according to Dr. Bergler that would mean that only one-fifth of the people are normal,

and I am terribly afraid that they paint or act, which is probably just as bad. In short the doctors are, I fear, dreadfully deceived. The normalcy fringe is even smaller than they suppose. Writing is often a secret vice practiced by insurance men and bank clerks; nothing can be done about it.

Felicitations and hearty concurrences to Mr. Cowley.

MARTHA BACON
Boston, Mass.

To the Editors:

Mr. Malcolm Cowley quotes a part of a sentence from an article of mine in the *American Imago*. I should like to quote the rest of the sentence for the information of those readers who may be interested: [The interpretation quoted by Mr. Cowley is] "an adult addition to the childhood construction of the negative oedipal fantasy." This is to say that while adults, including the author of *Ivanhoe* which I am discussing, may see the burning of Torquilstone castle in association with the sexual abuse which Ulrica, the incendiary, has suffered, *this connotation is not essential to the childhood experience out of which it grew* in Scott's mind.

To correct the impression that, as Mr. Cowley says, my students are "edified" by improper language, I should like to quote a few sentences from the article which he attacks. "The analysis of the novel here given is not intended as in any way complete and exhaustive. *Not is it given in the language and manner with which a teacher would present the novel to his class.* It is simply intended as a guide to the psychological structure of the story on the basis of which further analysis and discussion could continue."

ARTHUR WORMHOUDT
St. Cloud, Minn.

To the Editors:

I am deeply sorry that my article should have caused embarrassment to Dr. Wormhoudt. . . . I did not state or imply that Dr. Wormhoudt

followed the method in his own classes. Since writing the article I have heard from an independent source that Dr. Wormhoudt is a teacher with that rare gift of arousing interest and enthusiasm in his students. St. Cloud is fortunate to have such a teacher on its faculty.

MALCOLM COWLEY
New York, N. Y.

Churchill Quip—

To the Editors:

In his admirable description of "Churchill in His Element" [September], Mr. Woodrow Wyatt referred to Churchill's characterization of Prime Minister Ramsay MacDonald as "The Boneless Wonder." I was a guest in the Press Gallery of the House of Commons some twenty-odd years ago when, after a long, rambling, and diffuse speech by Ramsay MacDonald, Churchill convulsed a crowded House by commenting:

"The Prime Minister has the most remarkable facility of any man I know for compressing the largest number of words into the smallest amount of thought."

D. LUKIN JOHNSTON
Vancouver, Canada

Washington Exodus—

To the Editors:

Arthur Moore's article ["Why the Businessmen Are Leaving Washington," September] provokes me to reason that if all these fellows in question had made good, businesslike studies of Washington living and working conditions, they would never have been "dragged" there in the first place. Their present exodus demonstrates nothing so well as their own naïveté. . . .

DUTTON SMITH
Middlebury, Vt.

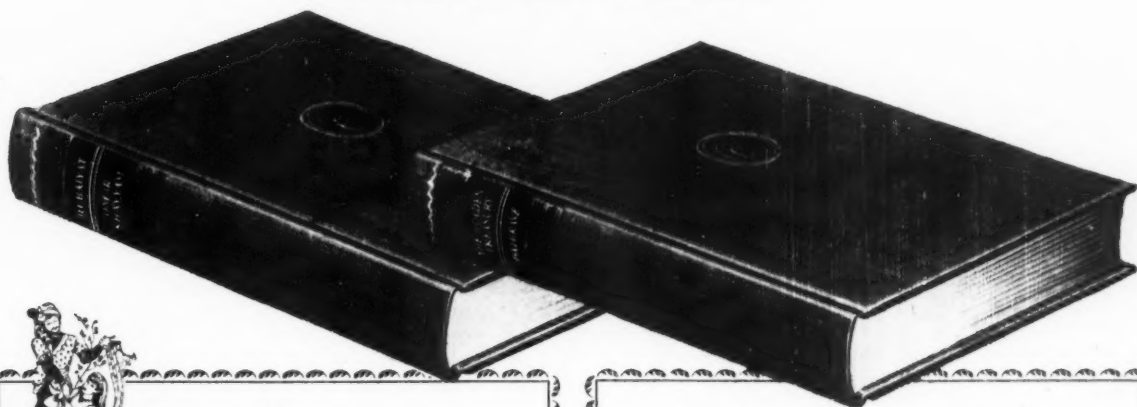
To the Editors:

Arthur Moore's article is good as far as it goes. Mr. Moore says that President Eisenhower needs "dedicated young Republicans." Does

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Mr. Perkins buys a pig



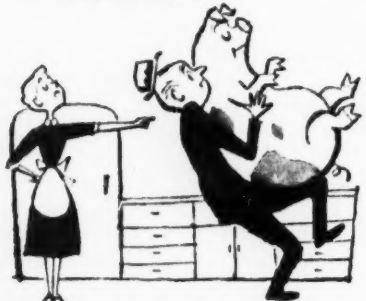
—and gets some first-hand information on what the American meat packing industry does to earn its keep.



1. "Why is it," Mr. Perkins asked his wife, "that you pay more than twice as much for pork chops as porkers are bringing on the farm? We will buy a whole pig—have pork chops more often and save a lot of money, too."



2. So Mr. P. drove to the country, bought a very choice 240-lb. pig (he hadn't known they ran so big). He also found out that . . .



3. There is quite a bit of difference between pork on the hoof and pork in the refrigerator. He had to hire somebody to turn the pig into eatin' meat.



4. When it was dressed, his 240-lb. pig had shrunk to only 180 lbs. It still had to be turned into kitchen cuts by somebody skilled at that sort of thing.



5. After cutting up, the 180 lbs. of pork had shrunk to only 135 lbs. of meat cuts—only 10 lbs. of which were center cut chops. The hams still had to be cured, bacon smoked and sliced, sausage made.



6. "I much prefer to be able to pick and choose just the cuts I want—when I want them," said Mrs. Perkins. "With packers and retailers on the job, I know any cut I want will be available when I want it."

LETTERS

Mr. Moore, or President Eisenhower, think anyone would be so naïve as to "dedicate" himself to the government after the shambles Mr. Philip Young and the Republican party made of civil service? RUTH SZOLD ZEISLER
Washington, D. C.

What's in a Name—

To the Editors:

While we are on the subject of trying names ["Who the Hell is Holy, Fair, and Wise?" in the June issue, and Mabel Gillespie's letter in September] how about Emma?

Mabel does mean "beloved or beautiful," but Emma means "grandmother or nurse." Pretty stimulating!

Novelists frequently have a maiden Aunt Em, preferably a resigned victim of circumstances, among their characters, poets shun the name, and popular song writers carefully avoid it.

Girls named Emma
Get in no dilemma.

EMMA MILLER REINHARDT
Phila., Pa.

[How about the heroine of Jane Austen's Emma?—The Editors.]

Fabulous Experiment—

To the Editors:

Cameron Hawley's article, "Indonesia, the Fabulous Experiment," in your August issue recalled a lecture I heard last year in Washington. The speaker was M. Maramis, First Secretary of the Indonesian Embassy, and he spoke to us of the struggles and aspirations of his nation. Among the means to reduce illiteracy he stressed an ingeniously simple device: every man and woman who has mastered reading and writing is called upon to teach ten other people. . . .

Another point of interest which emerges from the article was illustrated by Mr. Maramis' talk. It appears that Asian peoples, much as they despise their former Western overlords, are eager to adopt Western culture: Mr. Maramis mentioned with particular pride that the complete works of Shakespeare have been translated into Malay.

ANNA BRENNER
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The Easy Chair

by

Bernard DeVoto

In the Horse Latitudes

OF THE numerous calendars in use, solar, civil, ecclesiastical, and fiscal, none fits the movements of American society. The calendar to which we refer our feelings and behavior is based neither on the equinox nor the paschal moon but on an event in the month of September, the trouble with which is that it is variable, depending on who you are and what your habits are. New Year's Day comes in September all right but is it the Tuesday after Labor Day, the day after the family gets back from the beach, the day school opens (here the variation may be three weeks), or Registration Day at college? Even the white sales cannot be sure.

This indeterminateness, which corresponds to the inability of astronomical calendars to synchronize the lunar month with the solar year, further retards the naturally slow pickup of the human mechanism when it gets back to work. In 1954 the drag of a slow start was even more marked than usual, and more frustrating to an observer. No one was able to say with assurance what the Americans were heading toward in the year that began sometime in September. On the other hand, it was easy to determine where they were on that New Year's Day. They were in a region which can be precisely located on a map and one which is notorious for cross-currents. If they had a course, which was an arguable question, they weren't steering it by either the stars or the compass.

Their apathetic mood appears to have been anticipated and shared by our poets, intuitive men all. As a rule, the fall poetry season opens with a greater splendor than the rest of the year lives up to, but the show this year was mediocre. A carbonated soft drink for modern living had been born. To the patina of soft, supple leather a dash of moon dust had been added. Betting

that the talk about cancer of the lungs would increase the national hypochondria, someone had created a Milady Pipe in four colors. The lyrists of women's wear could soar no higher than the adjective "slinky," though there was a girdle that might change your life. Men's socks were Touch 'n Tingle. The girls could assure their legs a gentle misty look.

This last was an omen, in fact it proved to be the tipoff if you stayed with the poets. To the five established complexions, ivory, pink, medium, olive, and sepia, a newly discovered one had been added; its name was Radiant. Now the extraordinary energy and the long life of the queen bee, so the poem went on, are due to the food, called "royal jelly," amassed for her by the worker bees. (The workers are partially developed females.) Scientists in white jackets working in our own laboratories had now added this regal substance to a couple of cosmetics which that other sovereign, Her Majesty the American Woman, could pat into her own cheeks at bedtime. It would confirm her superiority to the only partially developed and might qualify her to lay 1,200 eggs a day—the queen bee does. Being French, the products were a threat to the American economy and might lead to quota restrictions and a hike in the import duty. But American enterprise refused to wait for protection and reacted swiftly; an American firm announced a night cream which contained serum, presumably blood serum, and a jigger of amniotic fluid. So much for reciprocal bees.

THE bearing of all this gradually became evident as one worked his way through the two leading journals of lyric poetry. The illustrations showed that while we weren't looking, a cultural upheaval had occurred, in fact a revolution. Sketched or photographed, in the ads or in the texts, the models who were

to fill the daydreams of Her Majesty were more pyknic than any we have seen for a long time. They were not the girls we had grown used to in these pages—elongated, chlorotic, slant-eyed and anemically depraved, with a touch of the Absinthe Drinker and a touch of rickets. They were a radically different fantasy of loveliness, moderately parabolic, rounded to a circumspect degree but by no means buxom, attractive but not, God forbid, seductive, part honors senior at Bryn Mawr, part air-line hostess. Their expression was reassuring, or possibly dissuasive—the right word for that discreetly Radiant complexion and for that grave, sincere smile was hard to find. The American Woman in the fall of '51 would be—well, “wholesome” did not say all of it and neither did “candid.” While the observer hesitated over “aseptic,” *Vogue* said it with authority: she would have The New Gentle Look. Jot down the phrase: it describes more than the acceptable female exterior for fall.

A CURRENT fashion in bars, for instance. The cocktail called the Gibson was invented for people in need of such a right hook to the solar plexus as undiluted gin delivers. But as we entered the serene season, along Madison Avenue, where most of our poetry is composed, people were asking for a “Gibson on the rocks.” It was a nonsensical contradiction; by diluting the gin it forfeited the only excuse the Gibson has ever had: but it signified a mood which, as anyone could see, was spreading widely. A traffic cop in Illinois was moved to tear up a ticket and to apologize to a motorist for having used, the dispatch said, “unseemly language.” In Las Vegas a performing tiger had to give up its Equity card because it had scratched a nightclub singer. Even Oklahoma was gentling; a hero out of Western fiction who got a loop round a cattle rustler and claimed a long-standing reward from the stock association learned that it had stood unclaimed for so long that there were no funds for it. The *Times* came up with a word that is sure to travel the length of Madison Avenue; it is “pogonotrophy” and means the growing of beards, not necessarily in competition with Commander Whitehead. But the new look’s gentlest flowering was the majority report on Senator McCarthy. Senator Dirksen collaborating with the Snow Maiden.

Carol’s and Edna’s complexion was not Radiant, they were throwbacks to pre-gentle times, and the New Englanders had to endure their third and fourth hurricanes in sixteen years. After the first one the New Bedford *Standard-Times*, a diffident, soft-spoken newspaper, denounced the Weather Bureau, possibly forgetting that it belongs to a Department of Commerce that is now soundly Republican. Calling hurricanes by the names of girls, the editorial said, was coy, facetious, and inappropriate. The Bureau replied that it had done its

best to work out designations which others would accept but no sale. Storms kept forming, no matter what *Vogue* said: you had to give them identifying and differentiating labels; experiments with numbers and the alphabet had produced confusion. Most of us supposed that the practice had originated with George Stewart’s Junior Meteorologist in *Storm*, and just what is wrong with it? Calling a disturbance Maria may have suggested something of its nature before the U. S. went decorous, and may be comforting to lonely weather-watchers. New Bedford would have fared no differently if it had been struck by Lambda Zero Three Coefficient K.

But Senator Green of Rhode Island had a more serious complaint about the Weather Bureau. He asserted that it had failed to give adequate advance warning of the first storm and, till much too late, had failed to describe as a hurricane what was on the way. (No such criticism could be made about the treatment of Edna: we were hearing about her before she got out of the delivery room.) I have no way of checking what happened in Rhode Island but the Boston Bureau was calling the storm a hurricane some hours before it got here; friends of mine on Cape Cod report that they got as much notice as they could use and conclude that certain tragedies near them resulted not from lack of warning but from failure to listen to the radio. I doubt a columnist’s allegation that, because the Rhode Island Bureau forecast a sixty-mile gale instead of a hurricane, “many houses were blown down . . . ancient trees were sent crashing to the ground . . . and light, power, and telephone service were eliminated.” The seventy-five-mile word would not have shored up a single tree, and both the columnist and the Senator missed a point. Perhaps the man at Providence was on Schedule C and aware that the Hatch Act forbids political activity. We need not expect Westinghouse to show us Betty Furness beaming while the iceman stows a fifty-pound chunk in the refrigerator, though in Cambridge, in the wake of Carol, we paid a dollar for the chunk.

IT is a muted season. When the McCarthy tried to get into his act before Senator Watkins’ committee, the gentleman from Utah broke sharply with the practice adopted by Mr. Mundt. He told Stentor that he was out of order, shut him up, and from then on held him to points at issue. One would have expected the first bang of that gavel to resound across the country and to go on echoing for a long time. Instead, it dwindled away as if muffled by sound-proofing material. The fact is puzzling and we had better not explain it too confidently. In August I traveled from the Charles to Puget Sound and back by a zigzag course that doubled the mileage, stopping at a number of places I had visited six months earlier. Everywhere I

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THE EASY CHAIR

went it was apparent that people were talking about the bullroarer much less than they had been earlier in the year. But why?

For one thing, he had been pretty much out of the headlines and off the air since the hearings of the Mundt Committee. Maybe the experience of quiet, which we had not had for so long we were forgetting it was possible, was so blessed that people did not want to break the spell. Maybe the cynicism of the procedures at the hearings, the venal rigging of everything in his favor, his contemptuous flouting and the chairman's timorous flouting of principles that most people revere, the daily revelation of the grossness of his mind—maybe the sum of these convinced the fringe who up till then had avoided judgment. Maybe people who had not previously detected the paranoia and the gang-fight tactics in his routine now saw them for what they were. Maybe, and this would be the most welcome reading, the fate that is certain to overtake all public performers has now reached him and he bores people.

Any of these explanations would permit us to hope that the shrinkage he has undergone will be permanent, and that Senator Watkins' refusal to be scared, overawed, or even disconcerted by him will progressively embolden others. But the real explanation may be different: the peculiar season we are experiencing. Maybe McCarthy, his past and his future, and his implications are among the subjects about which the public, at the moment, hasn't got any feelings positive enough to count.

THE fact that there are a good many things that no considerable part of the public is feeling strongly about establishes our position on the map. The northeast trades, which lie north of the equator, are the steady winds that made possible the dependable navigation of the North Atlantic by sailing ships. North of them lies a region whose name was a byword in the days of sail, the Horse Latitudes, so called because "cargoes of livestock sometimes had to be thrown overboard for lack of water." It is a region of calms, of light and variable winds,

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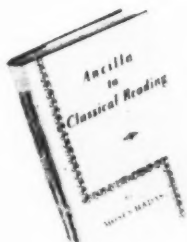
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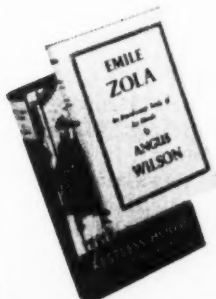
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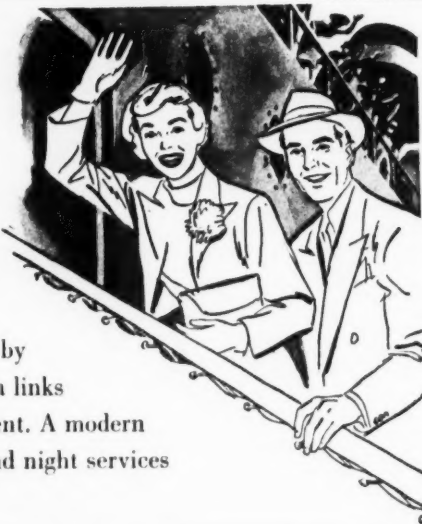
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THE EASY CHAIR

where progress in any direction takes a weary time, where such breezes as there are succeed one another without meaningful sequence and no breeze blows for very long. Since early summer the United States has been in the Horse Latitudes.

About six weeks before Congress adjourned, the Administration realized that it could do something about the division of its forces, took hold, and did do something. It got from Congress more than in May it seemed likely to but less than it could have got if it had tried earlier, and much less than its original and continuing advertising told us it was going to get. (A lot of people have written to me asking what happened to the Hope-Aiken grazing bill and the bill to authorize Echo Park Dam. Both of them died in the closing days of the session. Though that verb is technically accurate, in actual fact both were killed: the opposition licked them. It may well be that the grazing bill is licked for good. The forces lined up behind the Hope-Aiken bill were not enough to pass it and they were greater, it seems likely, than any that can again be mobilized in support of its objectives.) The reviews of the session which the newspapers published immediately after the adjournment seemed to be based on the public mood. The praise which the Republican papers dished out was remarkably tepid, and the disparagement of Democratic editorial writers, what there are of them, was of about the same strength.

LEGISLATION, decision, social action — except by default nothing gets very far in this country unless a lot of people are pretty angry or pretty scared. What has happened has mostly been by default. There have been plenty of things to anger and scare people, and indeed a lot of people have felt both emotions repeatedly this year. But, the curious point is, not for long. The airs have been light, contrary, from many directions, and short-lived.

Indochina went down the drain and no military position appears to have been prepared in advance for the allied nations to fall back on. France demobilized the European Defense Community; its collapse destroyed what laborious years had ac-

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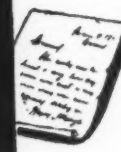
BOOKS:

In a privately printed book, titled "Drinking With Twain," it is recorded that Mark Twain visited the Old Crow Distillery, ordering 25 barrels to be shipped to his favorite tavern.



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THE EASY CHAIR

completed and opened those nations to dangers which had been checked; here too no alternative position appears to have been prepared and for the time being none could be clearly envisaged. Cracks and fissures opened across the coalition that had been put together with such difficulty; for the first time there seemed to be a possibility that it would break up. The prestige of the United States among its allies had dropped sharply, had fallen lower than would have seemed possible two years ago, and leadership in the job of aligning free governments against Communism had temporarily passed to the British. Nobody could tell—yet—what the Chinese threats about Formosa meant. Shock waves powerful enough to throw the pen of a seismograph off its pivot should have followed all of these developments. But after each banner headline the public ordered a Gibson on the rocks.

SCATTERED rains have in some places abated the drought that reaches well into the Middle West but without restoring the lost rainfall, and scattered revivals have abated the economic down-swing but without reversing the trend. Dividends are up and so is unemployment, taxes are down and so are farm prices, steel, automobiles, tourist spending, and a number of other indices that used to be thought significant. Stocks have been climbing; so have bankruptcies and the number of discount houses that shoot holes in the price system. In regard to all these matters the breezes that have been blowing, briefly, have come from many different points of the compass. But the official position is clear: the Prophets of Doom and Gloom were wrong in predicting an economic decline, for none has occurred, if any had occurred it would have been a healthy one. Mr. Truman started it, it has reached bottom, and by the favor of heaven we will now level off and move sideways.

So by the time our September New Year's day arrived anyone could see why the fall poetry opening had been such a flop. It had been turned over to the minor poets, or rather the sub-minor poets, for both first-

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THE EASY CHAIR

and second-stringers had been drafted for a more important job than adding moon dust to the patina of leather. The massed copy-writers have been planning what, among themselves, they probably call Operation Madison Avenue. What we need from now to November is salesmanship: a good trade name, an attractive package, and some catchy slogans. Observation has shown that the public is in the Horse Latitudes and that's exactly the best place for it. Let's keep it there. We'll push the New Gentle Look.

IN MID-SEPTEMBER every radio and television set is purveying wholesomeness and sincere candor every few minutes. The complexion of all salesmen is Radiant and they are all made up to resemble the Vice President's straightforward, eager manliness so closely that the campaign looks like an issue of *Vogue* for Boy Scouts. There has been no such praise of virtue and good old-fashioned American optimism since Calvin Coolidge—the copy-writers have drilled to a stratum that makes every well a gusher. Battalions of scientists in white jackets have been producing secret, magic ingredients and combining them in royal jelly. Patted into the cheeks at night, it whitens teeth, prevents body odor, takes inches off your hips, gets more miles to the gallon, and is the choice of 219 out of 224 men of distinction and practically all tobacco buyers. Clearly, till the day after Election Day at least stocks will be steady and skies will be Radiant, there will be no more hurricanes, no war talk, no tensions, no disconcerting headlines, and no issues. Not if B. B. D. & O. knows its stuff.

That is maybe. Sometimes plugging the New Gentle Look sells toothpaste but we had a whole deck of slogans for Indochina, EDC, and surplus labor and none of them got us anywhere. By November it usually proves better to meet issues than to assert that there aren't any. And there is an additional fact about the Horse Latitudes: sometimes a couple of the light airs collide there and what comes out of the meeting is Carol or Edna. But you can see, Senator Green, that no one would call it a hurricane except a Prophet of Doom and Gloom.

A Letter To Our NON-CATHOLIC Neighbors

Catholics and non-Catholics, as a rule, get along right well together.

Our families live amicably next door to each other and often become lifetime friends. Our sons fight side by side on every battlefield. We work together in the same shops and factories... root for the same baseball teams... do business with one another in a spirit of mutual trust every day.

In these and other phases of everyday life, there is a close association which promotes understanding and respect. But in religion... where this close association does not exist... there is often a regrettable lack of understanding and a corresponding absence of good-will.

Many people, for instance, have all sorts of false ideas about Catholics and the Catholic Church. They actually believe that Catholics worship statues... that many sordid things happen behind convent walls... that Catholics do not believe in the Bible... that Catholic teaching is pure superstition and the Mass nothing but mumbo-jumbo.

All non-Catholics, of course, do not believe such things. But enough of these false rumors are in circulation to cause some sincere and intelligent non-Catholics to look upon the Catholic Church with suspicion, and to reject Catholic truth without even troubling to investigate it.

It is for this reason that the Knights of Columbus, a society of Catholic laymen, publishes advertisements like this explaining what Catholics really believe. We want our non-Catholic friends and neighbors to understand us and our faith, even if they do not wish to join us. We want them to know the Catholic Church as it really is... not as it is so often misrepresented to be.

It is also important to you personally, however, to inquire into the teaching of the Catholic Church. For unless you do, you cannot know whether the Catholic



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History: Its Uses and Abuses

HISTORY too has its history, as **Lynn White, jr.**, counsels us at the opening of this month's lead article (p. 29). President White of Mills College, himself an historian of the medieval period, goes on to relate some of the most recent history of history—the new developments in technique, accessions of information, and shifts in attitude that are making it (as he says) a different sort of study not only in quantity but in quality as well. Not even the mind of a Toynbee, feels President White, has synthesized this volume and variety of new knowledge into a totally inclusive theory of the past.

P & O, though applauding this article and long admiring its author, wishes to exercise its right of respectfully disagreeing with the point about Toynbee and historical theory. The activity President White summarizes has also included the discussion of new ideas as to what history is about, some of them (and one man's in particular) philosophical enough to give even Toynbee competition. Not that we've got anything against Toynbee, either: *Harper's* has fair claim to having published the first article about Mr. Toynbee and his works in a general magazine ("Arnold Toynbee: The Boldest Historian," by Granville Hicks, February 1947), followed two months later by Mr. Toynbee's own "Encounters Between Civilizations." We subsequently discovered, to carry self-congratulation further, that we had twice published Toynbee way back in the '20s when neither we nor anyone else knew that he was headed for the covers of both *Time* and *Life*, and his present status as the Compulsory Quote. Mr. Toynbee's reputation is well-earned; and this autumn, which has seen the publication of the final volumes of *A Study of History*, is an appropriate occasion for saluting his breadth, serenity, and extraordinary erudition.

But we are sure Mr. Toynbee himself would be the first to reject an exclusive prominence which suggests he is currently the only historian

worth mentioning who holds an all-embracing view of history. It might be argued, in fact, that an important by-product of his work has been its stimulus to other scholars to adopt an equally broad and daring perspective. Some have even done so in specific disagreement with Toynbee's characteristic emphases, such as those on religion or the cyclic patterns of growth and decay. Others have argued for a total vision of life's progress upward from the slime so vast that Toynbee's twenty-odd "civilizations" dissolve into one another and lose their internal pattern or completeness. As often happens in this and other crafts, the more lowly practitioners are beginning to discover that they shared all along a set of unspoken assumptions and principles which a vigorous theorist like Toynbee forces them, in self-defense, to bring into the open. In P & O's opinion, the most notable of these non-Toynbee philosophies—and the one most likely, in the long run, to predominate—is that expressed by Herbert J. Muller in his book *The Uses of the Past* in 1952.

AN IDEA, as President White reminds us, can be a conceptual tool in the hands of the historian just as the Geiger counter can be a mechanical one. Professor Muller of Purdue calls his idea sometimes "an anthropological view of our history," sometimes a "tragic" view—"a spirit at once ironic, compassionate, and reverential." But he does not seek to make tools of historical ideas in the sense of arranging them into laws, or forcing them to fit a theoretical structure. His is the humanist's belief in history as a literary art based on a hard, factual accuracy—on Trevelyan's dictum: "It is the fact about the past that is poetic." Muller holds out for the possibility of broadening his "tragic view" into a "principle of historical analysis . . . that might not be precise, rigorous, or decisive enough to be dignified as a logical or scientific method, but that can be comprehen-

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sive, consistent, disciplined, roughly systematic, and always pertinent."

Only the "tragic view," in Professor Muller's opinion, can both comprehend and anticipate the technical advances and discoveries that President White describes in his article. "Without prejudice to science," Muller goes on, "it may help us to realize the value that Lionel Trilling attributes to literature, as 'the human activity that takes the fullest and most precise account of variousness, possibility, complexity, and difficulty.' *By systematically complicating all issues, stressing the defects and the excesses of all values, insisting on tension, imbalance, uncertainty, and contradiction as the essential conditions of civilization, and the source of both its glory and tragedy—by ironically qualifying the great triumphs, and reverently qualifying the great failures, we may get both a richer appreciation of the poetry and drama of history and a clearer understanding of the fact, the 'reality' that concerns social science. We may hope at once to be more humane and more realistic, more generous in our sympathies and more sober in our judgment.*" (Italics ours.)

IT SEEMS TO P & O that Muller's philosophy is not only all-inclusive but sufficiently in tune with the mid-twentieth century to serve many others besides historians. Dissatisfied with a dozen different certainties, we wallow in doubt—our dissatisfaction in no way tempered by the knowledge that we are responsible for our predicament and that "we too," as Professor Muller says, "shall in time belong wholly to the past." But our view of history, both Muller and White would agree, is one of the ways in which we shape the future; and there is much to be said for being sufficiently uncertain about the past to avoid binding oneself to certain fate. "We are not naturally wiser than our ancestors," writes Muller, "but the revolutionary conditions of our thought and life have forced a realization of relativity and complexity, the uncertainties of all history, and the ambiguities of the good old days that somehow led to these very bad days . . . All in all, we doubtless suffer from too much doubt. But we are likely to suffer

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PERSONAL & OTHERWISE

much more because too many men are too sure of themselves."

President White, the author of *Latin Monasticism in Norman Sicily* and *Educating Our Daughters: A Challenge to the Colleges*, was professor of history at Stanford before he came to Mills College in 1943.

This article [he writes] grew out of a convocation speech which I made to the Mills students a couple of years ago. I had gradually come to realize that the scientific revolution of our time is paralleled by an equally important and far-reaching revolution in the humanistic studies which are devoted to the effort to understand ourselves as human beings. But whereas scholars in the natural sciences are vividly aware of their revolution, and of the excitement of it, humanistic scholars, even the most adventurous of them, seldom seem to realize the novel implications of what they are doing.

For example, Marc Bloch was in my opinion the most provocative historian of his generation. When the Nazis finally tortured him to death for his activity in the French underground, he left an unfinished manuscript entitled *The Historian's Craft*. It is in many ways excellent but scarcely hints at the nature of the scholarly revolution in which Bloch himself was one of the greatest leaders!

Poverty? Boredom?

THE person most baffled by the problem of juvenile delinquency is often the one closest to it who cares most—the parent. Dr. Harris B. Peck quotes one mother who explained her bewilderment in a group discussion held by the Mental Health Service of the New York City Children's Court:

The majority of people in the neighborhood where children often get into trouble are poor people. . . . Maybe, like me, they do everything trying to make the children happy and when it doesn't seem to be any use at all, I just go out and work, work, work, and when the children are bad, I whip them even though I know it doesn't do any good.

This fluctuation between softness and toughness is a frantic refuge at best, but it is frequently all a parent can do. Some of the most useful help for youngsters in the

roughest neighborhoods is given by street-club workers, who find that youths in cities are often bothered more by boredom than by poverty.

Stacy V. Jones reports on one such worker and his activities in "The Cougars: Life with a Brooklyn Gang" (p. 35). Mr. Jones is a freelance reporter who came from Washington to Brooklyn to study the Cougars' turf and the New York City Youth Board. He regularly contributes a weekly roundup on patents to the *New York Times* Saturday financial page, and is the author of *How to Get It from the Government*.

•••The poem on page 47 is the third by *Sylvia Plath* to appear in this magazine. Miss Plath is a senior at Smith College.

•••*Sylvia Wright*, in whose errant imagination the romantic "Lady Mondegreen" was born and perished (p. 48), is the same Sylvia who produced "Who the Hell is Holy, Fair, and Wise?", "How to Make Chicken Liver Pâté Once," "My Kitchen Hates Me," and "Get Away from Me with Those Christmas Gifts" in previous issues of *Harper's*. Besides concocting such semi-vengeful humorous items as the above, she has written verse, both light and serious, edited a major utopian novel by her father, Austin Tappan Wright, and worked for the government and various publications. She is a Bryn Mawr graduate, and keeps house in New York and on Fishers Island.

During September this year, she weathered the hurricanes at the MacDowell Colony in New Hampshire, working on a novel. She was at one time croquet champion of the Colony and was frequently employed showing poets and composers and painters how to build wood fires.

•••Alderman Robert Merriam, a Chicagoan and a politician who does not conform to the clichés about either, will be watching the election returns this month along with the rest of us. To understand why he is involved in the outcome, and why his non-conformity is troublesome to both political parties, see *Joseph N. Bell's* analysis of Chicago's peculiar Democratic tie-up on page 52.

P & O

Mr. Bell is a free-lance magazine writer, formerly in advertising and public relations. He was a Navy pilot for four years and is a graduate of the University of Missouri School of Journalism.

•••*Storm Jameson's* new story, "The Mask" (p. 59) was written in France during one of the English novelist's many Continental visits. She has written well over a score of books of fiction and non-fiction and has traveled outside England frequently. In 1945 she visited Poland and Czechoslovakia, following up her war work in behalf of refugee writers, and in 1948 spent a year in the United States lecturing at the University of Pittsburgh with her husband, Professor Guy Patterson Chapman of Leeds University.

The American success of Storm Jameson's last novel, *The Green Man*, lends excitement to the publication of her next, *The Hidden River*, which will be out in February 1955.

•••Since 1946, when he wrote *The Concept of the Corporation*, **Peter F. Drucker** has been working out the ideas about modern American industry that appear in his article on "The Responsibilities of Management" (p. 67). Mr. Drucker, who is professor of management in the Graduate School of Business at New York University, has tried out his theories in practice over the years with a number of large corporations for which he has worked as a management and policy adviser. He has also written two influential books in the process—*The New Society* (1950) and *The Practice of Management*, which was published last month—and many articles on more specialized problems, such as "The Medical Insurance We Need Most" and "The Myth of American Uniformity."

•••The busy Majorcan sojourn of **Charles W. Thayer** and his family, described on page 73 for the use and delectation of would-be tourists and householders, occurred shortly after Mr. Thayer had completed a long and varied career of United States government service. A West Point graduate, class of '33, and a Second Lieutenant in the Cavalry of the

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P & O

U. S. Army (in those days they rode horses, and Thayer was first horseman of his class). Mr. Thayer went abroad and got his first government job as a messenger boy in the U. S. Embassy in Moscow. Later he held the post of vice-consul in Berlin; he established the U. S. Legation in Kabul, Afghanistan; he was a parachutist and chief of the Military Mission to Yugoslavia, and political adviser on General Clark's staff in Vienna; after the war he organized the "Voice of America" to Russia, was U. S. Political Liaison Officer to the Bonn government, and Consul General in Bavaria.

Mr. Thayer is the author of two books about adventures in diplomacy: *Beats in the Caviar* and *Hands Across the Caviar*.

•••Though *James D. Koerner's* sharp query, "Can Our Teachers Read and Write?" (p. 79) grows out of his college teaching experience in the Midwest, Mr. Koerner insists the problem is general, not specific to any region. "The sad truth is," he said to P & O, "that the profession is simply not attracting the intelligent, idealistic, and courageous young people that *could* be its salvation."

Now studying under a Ford Foundation grant at Harvard and MIT, Mr. Koerner is regularly assistant professor of English and American studies at the Kansas State College. He was an Army pilot and flying instructor for three years and received his Ph.D. from Washington University in St. Louis.

•••Lynn White's idea of "the changing past" is brilliantly illustrated by *Cecil Woodham-Smith's* delightful sidelight on the Crimean War, "The Last Romantic War" (p. 86). Mrs. Woodham-Smith has enthralled readers on both shores of the Atlantic with her two histories published in the past five years: *Florence Nightingale* and *The Reason Why*—both examples of the truth that the past which we possess in the mid-twentieth century is new and uniquely different from that which Tennyson and his contemporaries conceived as theirs.

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in Harper's Magazine
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evidence on both sides of the
current cigarette controversy

by Leonard Engel

P & O

gan her professional work on the Florence Nightingale biography during the rigors of World War II in London.

•••"The New Books" this month (p. 94) are in the deft hands of *Randall Jarrell*, poet, novelist, critic, whose most recent book was *Pictures from an Institution*, a satire on the academic life.

In the December issue, *Joseph Henry Jackson* will be guest critic. Mr. Jackson is the literary editor of the *San Francisco Chronicle*; his sagacity as a judge of books and urbanity as writer and editor have helped to maintain San Francisco's reputation as a cosmopolitan center.

La Fontaine Revised

ONE of our editors reports some success in a variety of speech-making chores with an anecdote he claims can be adapted to nearly any audience or subject. Following is the form in which it was used at a conference of the College English Association on business and the liberal arts:

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"Well," said the ant, "I don't mean to tell you how to run your life; but, frankly, this ant business has been vastly overrated. There are so many people down there, and it gets so cold, and we don't always have enough to eat either. If you want to know what I think you should be, it isn't an ant but a cockroach. They really have it made—sit indoors all the time, where it's nice and warm, and people are always dropping food around."

"You convince me," said the grasshopper. "I'll do just as you say. How do I go about becoming a cockroach?"

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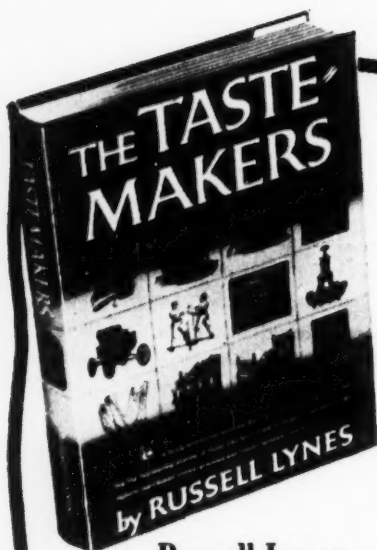
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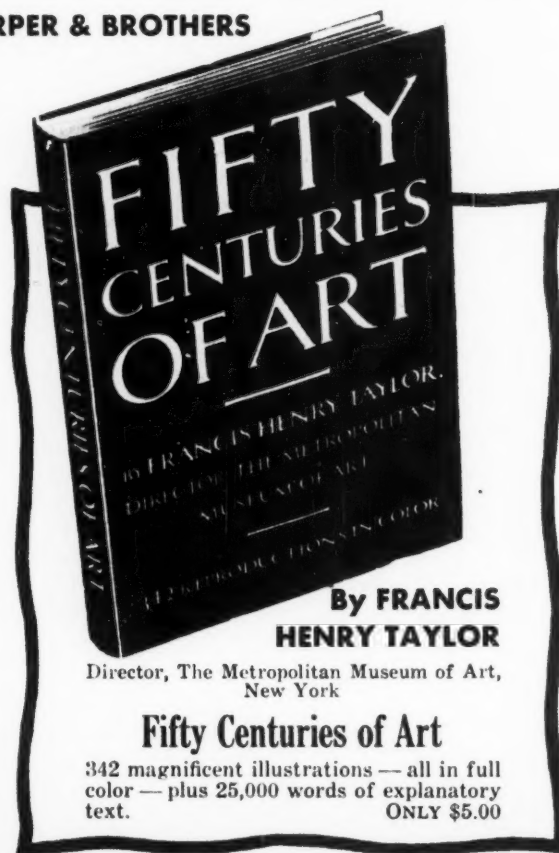
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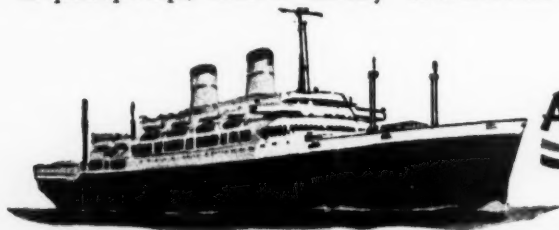
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MAGAZINE

The Changing Past

Lynn White, jr.

(History, says an historian turned college president, does not repeat itself. Under the impact of new discoveries and new techniques it is in fact changing both in content and point of view—and with it changing our ideas of what the past was like and the future might become.)

HISTORY too has its history, and today far more is happening in the quiet studies of historians than most people suspect. For one thing, history is being made faster than we can absorb it. In our time, for the first time, it has suddenly become global and the mere quantity of the stuff is overwhelming. East and South Asia, Russia, and pre-Columbian America can no longer be treated as fine-type footnotes to Western Civilization. As yet no mind, not even Arnold Toynbee's, has really digested the new material. But even the most specialized historian senses the job to be done.

The busy spades of archaeologists are further complicating matters by digging up not only objects but whole cultures unknown even a few years ago. In 1900 the Hittites were hardly more than a name in the Bible. Today Yale is publishing a bulky Hittite dictionary. The jungles of Cambodia have been torn aside to reveal the astonishing remains of Angkor Wat and the vanished Khmer civilization. Moslem fanatics still prevent excavation of the South Arabian ruins of Saba whose queen may have visited Solomon nearly three thousand years ago, but in the Indus valley a

cluster of cities perhaps as old as Babylonia or Egypt has come to light. On Crete and in the Aegean the Minoans are emerging from the mists. In 1953 a British architect who had worked on Nazi spy codes during World War II cracked the most common form of Minoan writing. Studies of the early Germans and Celts are fast changing our notions of what the Romans found when they marched north of the Alps. And in the Americas, Aztec and pre-Aztec, Inca and pre-Inca cultures, always curious and sometimes magnificent, are turning up in most embarrassing profusion. We really don't know what to do with all the history we now have.

But historians these days are not just excited about the quantitative expansion of history in time and space. The most fascinating part of their business is the recent discovery of new ways of quizzing the dead, fresh methods of interpreting and understanding the traces left by old thoughts, deeds, and passions. History is changing its quality too.

The growth of the natural sciences in our time has put novel power-tools into the historian's kit. In 1949 a counter was perfected which would measure the amount of

radioactive carbon in animal or plant material up to 25,000 years old. In 1953 at the Universities of Manitoba and Chicago two types of scintillation counters were developed which promise to date such objects over a span of some 44,000 years with a maximum error of thirty-seven years. While puzzling problems remain in the use of these machines, we can now take a few splinters from a beam, charcoal from an ancient campfire, a bone or a shred of cloth from a tomb, and attempt to give them pin-point dates. Within a decade we may have for the first time a world-wide chronology which will connect events in the regions of written records to those in the far larger areas which have lacked either writing or dates.

Merè literacy has never been identical with intelligence or vitality. For an understanding of the movements of history, the unlettered but not necessarily stupid or uncultured barbarian is often as important as the city-dweller. Indeed, the latter has often awakened to discover himself subject to that same barbarian and required to modify his arts and social order to suit his new master's taste. Moreover it has already helped our time perspective to learn that while the Athenians were building the Parthenon, the temples and tombs of Monte Alban near Oaxaca were under construction; that when Augustus was boasting that he had found Rome a city of brick and turned it into a city of marble, the vast Pyramid of the Sun at Teotihuacan near Mexico City was already ancient and subject to enlargement over old cores.

EVER since the invention of agriculture, people have been so mixed up with plants that the current development of botany has opened up entirely new kinds of historical evidence. The study of fossil pollen, for instance, is throwing new light on the history of Northern Europe. All the way from Ireland to Finland there are peat bogs, and annually a new layer of peat moss is laid down in them. As the breezes blow, some of the local pollen is deposited on the summer's growth of moss, and this pollen, despite its delicacy, is so well preserved that the species of each grain can be identified under a microscope.

Climatic changes may be detected in shifts in the kinds of trees and plants sur-

rounding a bog as reflected in changing pollens in the levels of peat. These levels can be dated rather exactly, so that we now have a climatic history of the regions around the Baltic and North Sea extending over several thousand years.

ONE of the most startling results is the discovery of a sudden worsening of climate about 1300 A.D. which made farming so difficult that during the next three generations thousands of villages in Northern Europe were abandoned. No change in physical climate can account entirely for the almost terrifying changes in the intellectual and emotional climate of the fourteenth century. It has long been recognized as an age of turmoil, agony, soul-searching, and new departures. But the careful counting of grains of fossil pollen has given us new insight into the sufferings and discontents of the Northern peasantry, and into the economic hazards and consequent neuroses of their feudal overlords.

The botanists also have renewed old controversies by finding good evidence of two-way contact between Asia and South America since very early times. The skipper of the *Kon-Tiki* has popularized the fact that the sweet potato, a New World plant, was found by the first white explorers all over Polynesia bearing its American Indian name. The yam, originally from the East Indies, was known in the Caribbean before Columbus' time, while a gourd which is native to India is found in Peruvian graves earlier than 1000 B.C. A cotton with fourteen long chromosomes was domesticated very early, presumably in India. It was taken to America, where it crossed with a cotton having fourteen short chromosomes. The hybrid seems to have been carried westward again to the Pacific Islands before Europeans reached those waters.

Certain very specific things common to Asia and to the New World have long been noted (parcheesi, blowguns, the abacus, hieroglyphics, four-wheeled pulling-toys, zero, decorative motifs, and the like) although most historians have brushed the matter aside as pure coincidence. But, as one botanist has remarked, "plants are not constructs of the mind." Their wanderings back and forth across the Pacific having been proved, the question of the spread of the other items is

reopened. The cultural history of mankind may have far more unity than hitherto we have thought possible.

New Kinds of Evidence

THE present growth of historical studies, however, is due only in small part to techniques and novel kinds of evidence provided by the natural sciences. A new idea can be a more important instrument of research than a Geiger counter or electronic microscope. And the new ideas are burgeoning.

Historians have recently waked up to the extent to which they have been document-bound. The written records upon which they depended in the past, with the rarest exceptions were the product of the upper classes and reflect their interests and the things they cared to talk about. Record-keeping began with a tiny dominant group of priests and rulers. Gradually through the centuries more of the nobility, and eventually some of the greater merchants, entered the charmed circle of the "historical." But, even as late as the eighteenth century, what do we really know—and in terms of the written records what can we know—about the nine-tenths of the people, even in literate societies, who were themselves illiterate and voiceless? Not until the age of the American and French Revolutions did the great masses become articulate and emerge clearly into the historical records.

There is a vast sub-history which is very like pre-history. It must be explored if we are to have a history of humanity rather than just of the aristocracy. The task is by no means hopeless: there are ways of gleaning the fields which conventional historians thought they had harvested. We have archaeological data, pictures, even the casual metaphors of the upper classes. How many readers of Dante realize that the first evidence of the windmill in Italy is found in the last canto of the *Inferno* where Satan threshes his arms "like a mill which the wind turns"? A poet does not use such a figure unless it is immediately recognizable: windmills must have been common in Italy by Dante's day. Yet no one who could write had bothered to mention one. We may be sure that the people who sweated for a living were not so indifferent to this major power-machine.

It would be very wrong to picture the submerged nine-tenths as dumb brutes. If there is anything in genetics, we can't permit ourselves to think so, for we are all descended from them. There was much originality and creative force in those who did not get into the records. To a great extent (although not entirely) changes in the so-called fine arts and literature are refinements of the folk art and oral literature of the common people. Just as many traits of the modern American novel sprang from the supposedly contemptible "penny horrors" of our nineteenth century, so it appears that such things as harmonic music and rhymed poetry are humble in their origins.

Indeed, since aristocracies breed themselves out, in every age the ambitious and able have managed to up-grade themselves socially, bringing their basic attitudes with them. Perhaps peasants are more responsible than philosophers for the ideas which we all take for granted.

ANYONE who has become acquainted with educated and sensitive Asians traveling among us to explore our minds has been told, not once but often: "The thing which fundamentally separates you Americans and Europeans from all the rest of mankind is that you live *on* nature, not *with* nature." To which we refrain from replying, "Why, yes! This accounts for our superiority!" and, with evasive amiability, pour another martini for our guests.

Where did we get this distinctively Western notion of our relation to nature? From the earliest times land was distributed among peasants in allotments sufficient to support a family. Although the peasant paid rent for his land, usually in produce or services, the assumption was subsistence farming. Then in Northern Europe, and there alone, a great change took place in agricultural methods. During the early Middle Ages a new kind of heavy plow came into use with a moldboard to turn over the sod. Friction with the soil was so much greater than in the case of the older two-ox scratch-plow that normally eight oxen were needed. But no peasant had eight oxen of his own. So the peasants began to pool their ox-teams to work a single plow, each taking strips of plowed land in proportion to his contribution. Thus the standard

of land distribution ceased to be the needs of a family and became the ability of a new machine to till the land. No more fundamental change in the idea of man's relation to the soil can be imagined: once man had been part of nature; now he became her exploiter.

WE SEE the emergence of this same attitude in the illustrated calendars available from Roman times onward. The oldest of these show the twelve months as allegorical ladies holding flowers, fruits, and other symbols of the season. The mood is passive, contemplative. Then gradually during the Middle Ages the pictures change to scenes of human activity: planting, harvesting, wood-chopping, people knocking down acorns for the pigs to eat, pig-slaughtering. Man and nature are two things, and man is on top. We who are the children of the peasants of Europe take this for granted; but it deeply disturbs many Asians.

Probing into sub-history, the historian finds relationships which have had tremendous effects on the "higher" culture but of which there is no written record. Before the invention of the spinning wheel about 1300 A.D., spinning the yarn was the most expensive process in producing ordinary, non-luxury textiles. The spinning wheel, which was gradually perfected, greatly reduced the price of cloth, the market for it expanded, and ordinary people began for the first time to use linen shirts, underwear, kerchiefs, sheets, towels, and the like. As a result, the price of linen rags, then the chief raw material for European paper, sank, and with it the cost of paper itself. Until paper became much cheaper than parchment, it was not likely that anyone would undertake the arduous task of developing printing with cast movable type. Even if printing had cut the labor cost of the scribe, books would have remained a luxury commodity, unsuited to mass production, so long as the raw material for them was as expensive as parchment. We who read are no more indebted to Gutenberg than to the unknown and lowly inventor of the spinning wheel who provided the context for Gutenberg. And the person who made the first spinning wheel had an excellent mind: he invented the belt-transmission of power too.

This sort of thing bothers many historians, professionally trained as they are to provide a documentary footnote to "prove" every statement. But much of life escaped the documents. If we are to discover the history of our race and not merely that of the literate upper crust, the historian must create his patterns of probable truth less in terms of specific records and more in terms of relationships intuitively evident to him as he deals with the records.

This is a dangerous game, for it increases the chance that unscrupulous forces may manipulate history for present purposes. We have seen it so used in every totalitarian state. But dangerous or not, the game cannot be avoided. While he can never afford to lose touch with all the recorded facts he can get, the historian is forced by the development of his field to become more and more like the critic of literature. Clio is resuming her place in the sisterhood of the arts.

The Subconscious of the Dead

THE part which intuitive perception must play in the study of history is heightened by the insights of psychology into the interconnection of all parts of human experience and into the importance of the subconscious. We are beginning to be able to trace the pre-natal history of ideas and attitudes in the subconscious of people who perished centuries ago.

For instance, why did the atomic theory of the nature of matter appear so suddenly among the ancient philosophers of the Ionian cities? Their notion that all things are composed of different arrangements of identical atoms of some "element," whether water, fire, ether, or something else, is an intellectual invention of the first order, but its sources are not obvious.

The key is to be found in the saying of Heraclitus that "All things may be reduced to fire, and fire to all things, just as all goods may be turned into gold and gold into all goods." He thought that he was just using a metaphor, but the basis of the metaphor did not exist until shortly before his time. The distinctive thing about Ionia, the chief stimulus to the commercial prosperity which provided leisure for the atomistic philosophers, was the inventor: in Asia Minor of coinage.

The age of barter was ended: now every commodity could be bought and sold for officially stamped pieces of metal of guaranteed uniform weight. Probably no Ionian was aware of any connection between this unique new economic device and the brainstorms of the local intellectuals. But that a causal relationship did exist can scarcely be doubted, even though it cannot be "proved" but only perceived.

There are times when our rummagings into the unconscious of the past are so detailed, and the conclusions so firm, that we have the illusion of "proof" in the old-fashioned documentary sense. But the method of research is in fact completely new and revolutionary: we are stretching the past out on the analyst's couch.

IT is becoming clearer, for example, that in the later twelfth and thirteenth centuries a seismic shift began to take place in the nature of Christian piety. What people said in words is less revealing than what they said unconsciously in religious art. Only a conservative Spanish bishop, Luke of Tuy, sensed what was happening: he denounced pictures of "one-eyed Virgins," by which he meant representations of St. Mary in profile. His fears were well grounded.

Christian art up to that time had been largely frontal, as that of the Eastern Church still is. Such images establish a direct and almost hypnotic relationship with the worshiper whom they fix with their eyes: they form an art capable of conveying power and spiritual grace. But as soon as the eyes of the image shift from the worshiper, religious art becomes drama rather than sacrament, and the worshiper tends to become merely a spectator. Any spiritual value which the new art has, comes from the spectator's personal psychological reaction to the scene observed.

Nowhere is the new religious focus better shown than in the changing ways of representing the Last Supper. The early pictures of it are inspired by the moment when Christ (always shown frontally) takes the bread and says, "This is my body broken for you." It is the institution of the Mass: Christ is the first priest, and the disciples are gathered about him as congregation. The emphasis of the picture is completely sacramental.

Then a new way of showing the Last Sup-

per came into fashion: the moment is no longer the breaking of the bread but now it is the sop given to Judas. To the late medieval mind this was an episode of terrible significance: what should have been the bread of salvation was in fact confirmation of Judas' damnation. The intention of God is defeated by the sinfulness of man. The scene combines in equal measure sacrament and drama.

In the later thirteenth century a third style appears: the moment shown is that at which Christ says, "One of you shall betray me." Judas recoils. The other disciples are thrown into consternation, crying, "Lord, is it I? Is it I?" Through the generations each disciple became psychologically differentiated, and the tradition of this form of the Last Supper culminated in Leonardo's masterpiece. For our purposes the thing to be noted is that in this representation, sacrament has vanished entirely and drama is everything. The human situation has displaced the transit of divine grace as the center of attention.

A related change is seen in pictures of the Annunciation. In the earlier period, St. Mary is going about her housekeeping and is startled by the sudden intrusion of the Archangel Gabriel with his message. But in the thirteenth century the Virgin is increasingly shown at prayer or reading holy writ. In other words, in early Christianity, when God speaks Man hears. In the later period the mind must be prepared for the divine message. The focus of religion shifts away from the saving power which comes from outside Man and centers on the problem of human adjustment. For the last seven centuries this tendency, despite periodic reactions, has continued. In our own time Christian Science, psychosomatic medicine, and psychoanalysis have made not merely salvation (renamed "adjustment") but physical health itself dependent upon the subjective psychological state of the individual. From his standpoint, Bishop Luke of Tuy was entirely correct.

Healing by History

ARE interpretations of this sort valid? Are they "objectively there," inherent in the historical material? Or are they "subjective," imposed by the mind of the historian? To most of us who live in the middle of the twentieth century they will

seem objective because they reflect the typical mental processes of our age. But to historians of even fifty years ago, not to mention the educated public, such forms of thought would have been unintelligible.

The enigmas of human nature may of course be studied in the living men and women around us, and in ourselves. But the billions of our fellows who are dead, and the vanished pageant of their generations, have left traces equally instructive, and instructive in new ways each decade. The past does not exist. What we call the past is our present thinking about what went on before us. Today the past is changing with incredible rapidity because our ways of thinking are in flux and expansion.

The research of historians, however, is far more than a passive reflection of the change of values which is at the heart of the turmoil of our time. What they are discovering and how they are discovering it is a major part of our present intellectual adventure, and affects all other parts of it. Like every humanistic scholar, the historian is trying to show people the meaning of what they are up to. By making men aware, conscious of the implications

of their actions, history is to some extent modifying and molding the historical processes which it studies: the historian is actor as well as spectator. The airplane has unified the globe physically, but only the mutual respect which comes from an increasing sense of the global history of mankind will turn geographical shrinkage from bane to blessing. The democratic revolution of the past two centuries has in some ways been frustrated by the carry-over into our new society of educational and cultural assumptions suitable only to the age of aristocracy. The historian's discovery of sub-history is helping us slowly to create a world which will prize all originality and not merely the kinds which were valued by the upper classes of the past. And in an era when rapid change breeds fear, and fear too often congeals us into a rigidity which we mistake for stability, the historian's exploration of the subconscious of past generations, and of the ways in which their real beliefs and tendencies were so often at variance with their professions, may lend us a healing humility when we look at ourselves. The way the past is changing may foreshadow a better future.

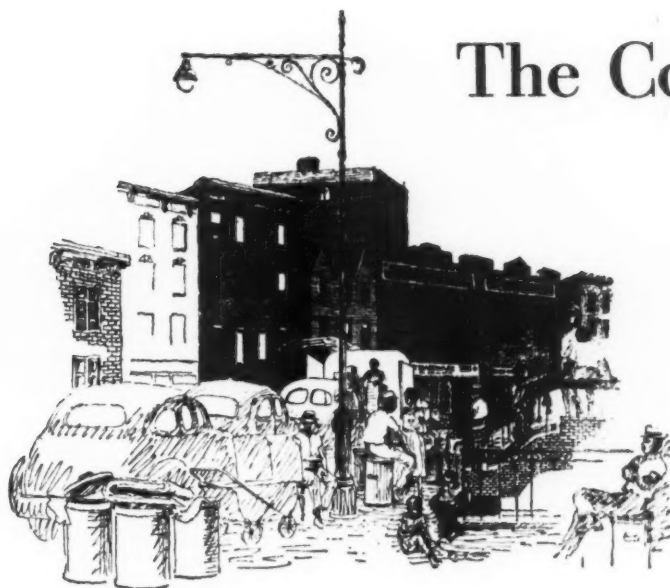
The Other End of the Telescope, for a Change

IN HISTORICAL perspective, secrecy in atomic energy matters has been based at least in part on wishful thinking. . . . We can only surmise why the U.S.S.R. became armed so soon. Personally, I believe it was primarily through the efforts of Soviet scientists and engineers, backed up by a ruthless totalitarian resolve to dominate the world, that the U.S.S.R. became armed with fission weapons as early as 1949. . . .

Espionage assisted the Soviet project but only in a secondary way. Ascribing Soviet achievement primarily to espionage is tantamount to grossly underestimating the technical strength of this enemy of free nations. . . . We must stop kidding ourselves with the dangerous fiction that we are just naturally better than the U.S.S.R. in technical matters. The Russians have the skills and the plants to make fissionable materials and bombs. . . . No matter how much we conceal, they will go ahead in proportion to the effort they expend. . . .

—James G. Beckerly, Director of Classification of the Atomic Energy Commission, before the Atomic Industrial Forum, March 16, 1954.

The Cougars



Life with a Brooklyn Gang

Stacy V. Jones

Drawings by Tom Knoth

You would never take Kenny Marshall, a minister's son with two college degrees, for a street-corner loafer. Yet a few days before Christmas, 1950, he began spending his evening on corners in the drab Bedford-Stuyvesant section of Brooklyn. He stared idly into store windows, dropped in at the pool hall, and loitered where groups of boys collected under street lamps and on front stoops. Mostly he just hung around.

After three weeks he concentrated on a candy store, a little restaurant across the street with a juke box, and a corner near a movie. He had concluded that they were favorite gathering places of the Cougars, one of the toughest gangs in Brooklyn.

It was the Cougars and their neighbors and bitter rivals, the Wasps, who had fought the Battle of Prospect Park on the previous May 30. Memorial Day is the traditional date for the settlement of gang scores. Because the police had wind of their plans for a park battle, the gangs met halfway between their

homes and the park. The battle began just as spectators were leaving the route of a morning parade. Some forty shots, by newspaper estimates, were fired from zipguns. One Wasp who was arrested had a bullet-crease across his forehead.

That afternoon the lines reformed in the park itself, the Wasps this time reinforced by satellites. A fifteen-year-old boy onlooker was seriously wounded.

A month earlier, a Cougar had been fatally stabbed, and there had been other homicides. The New York City Youth Board—an agency of the Mayor's office formed three years before—set out to reach the tough kids in Bedford-Stuyvesant and elsewhere who would never have walked into a social agency's office of their own accord. Kenny was assigned as a street-club worker ("street club" is a euphemism for gang) to gain the Cougars' confidence, and another trained man was sent as ambassador to the Wasps. In all, seventeen workers were detailed to gangs in the city.

The Bedford-Stuyvesant Tongue

turf: a gang's territory
bopping, clubbing: gangfighting
 to **hop:** to fight a pitched battle; among the white gangs, the noun is "rumble"
sneak: a raid on a rival gang, catching one or two boys alone
come down, turn it on: to raid, usually in force
zipgun: a home-made pistol
 a **heat:** a pistol
 to **burn:** to shoot
split, split the scene: to run away
rep: standing, face kudos, status
ranking, sounding: belittling somebody to his face, in a scornful, often bullying manner
session, set: party (from jam session)
 to **turn a session out:** to break it up
fishin': slow dancing
strays: boys without group affiliation
debs: gang members' girls
broads, chicks: girls in general
cornbread, bread: a fellow with a Southern accent
smooth: applied to boys or clubs that don't gangfight
smoothie: a non-delinquent
hung up: in trouble, as left in the lurch by a girl

KENNY had little information to start with except a few names. But he had several assets. For one thing, he had known Bedford-Stuyvesant and its boys since his own childhood. His father's church was a mile from the candy store. He was of slight build, a boyish twenty-five years. His manner was disarming, and he was dressed inconspicuously. But, most important, he was doing exactly the kind of work he wanted to do. Since then, for nearly four years, Kenny has spent his working hours in the Cougars' turf, and has seen one generation of "deprived" kids (to use the social worker's jargon) half-way through their critical teens.

That first winter, in the fly-specked candy store, Kenny listened openly, and with a friendly air, to the boys' talk about sessions, about the Dodgers' chances for next season, and about bopping. Occasionally he passed around cigarettes. At the restaurant he "fed the kitty" by dropping nickels into the juke

box, and listened to the talk about the new mambo records. If some lad surreptitiously switched his selection, Kenny's expression did not change. Usually he gave the nearest boy a chance to punch the numbers. They liked "Sleep," by Earl Bostic, a fast jump tune that belied its name. "A crazy sound," said one lad approvingly.

The boys practiced solo dances to that number, or to one of the recordings of "Sixty-Minute Man," another fast tune. Just for listening, they liked songs recorded by the Orioles or other male quartets.

Gangtalk

THE talk Kenny overheard was a compound of bebop terms, obscenity, and ordinary American tempered with a racial softness. "Man, that was a cool session. . . . I told that obscenity broad to get her obscenity the hell out of there." He might have overheard similar slang in central Harlem, but not among the Irish or Italians. For the Cougars, like the Wasps, were a Negro gang, and although Brooklyn's gang problem was neither a Negro nor a racial problem, the Cougars had their own ways. (Cougars and Wasps are fictitious names; use of the real ones might hamper Kenny's work.)

At first Kenny memorized the talk he overheard and, back at the office near Brooklyn's Borough Hall, dictated typical passages to a long-suffering stenographer. They are valuable to sociology students but quite unsuited to magazine use. The bebop terms generally had the fixed meanings they have acquired outside true bebop music circles. Anything nice was crazy or cool. A punk, a square, or a turkey was somebody not in the know. The gang boys themselves were cats. The talk was studded with four-letter obscenities, or their compounds, that had fluid meanings. They served as nouns, verbs, or adjectives, and might be applied in admiration or contempt.

The cats outwardly ignored Kenny's presence, but he felt their suspicion. They thought he would flash a badge and say, "Let's go!" the first time they pulled out a pair of dice.

When they decided he wasn't a cop or a stoolie, Kenny developed a nodding acquaintance with several. If a cat said something particularly biting, he would glance Kenny's

way, hoping to catch an appreciative smile. But for weeks Kenny wasn't sure whether he was gaining or losing with the gang. To get a rise out of the crowd he joined a crap game one night. The boys knew more about him than he thought. "Say, man," a lad in a lumberjack told him, "you're supposed to be out here to change us and it seems like we're making you act like us instead."

AS THEY talked more freely in front of him, Kenny learned that occasionally a Wasp clique would hijack a bakery truck, roll a drunk, or joyride in a stolen car. Once he was offered a share in the loot from a rifled candy truck. Now and then some boy tried to give him a stolen pack of cigarettes.

A Cougar working in a candy store handed him back all his money along with the purchase. "Although it made the boy a little uncomfortable," said Kenny later, "I was able to explain to him afterward some of the reasons why I did not feel I could take it from him. We try never to be the self-righteous, lecturing kind."

Kenny got his first real opening when he heard two Cougars talking about jobs. "I think I can help you cats," said Kenny. One of them agreed to come to the Youth Board's Brooklyn office next day.

Instead of the applicant he expected, there arrived the leader of one of the Cougar cliques, a lanky youth with a hard jaw and a habit of fidgeting with his hat. He had come to case the joint and see what Kenny's story was. As he himself wanted a job, Kenny sent him, and later the other lad, to a private agency in Manhattan that helps the hard-to-place. They both got jobs as messengers.

To the Cougars, Kenny became "the job man." They had seen his office, and they knew he didn't call in the cops. Within a couple of months, he was conditionally accepted, but it was six months before he felt fully "in." He was gratified one night, as a group started along toward a secret meeting place, to have one boy say to him, "Man, you coming?"

Kenny's wife and mother were frequently worried about his safety, especially after he began attending parties (sessions). At a session, a hundred boys and girls might be jammed into a single railroad flat, and there were a dozen ways for a fight to start. Kenny

is five feet, six and a half inches tall, and some of his charges towered over him.

"I was only threatened once," he said the other day. "That was when some row had broken up a session, and I went outside with the others. A fellow from another gang pulled a switchblade knife on me. I was wearing a sweater and I suppose I looked pretty much like the rest of them."

"I told him he'd better look out, as he was dealing with a man. I walked slowly away, and he put his knife in his pocket. After all, he was pretty drunk."

"Workers are never in danger from their own boys," he went on. "In fact, citizens rarely get hurt in gangfights, unless they're accidently in between. It's a miniature underworld, and the boys recognize their enemies when they see them."

The Tactics of Street Warfare

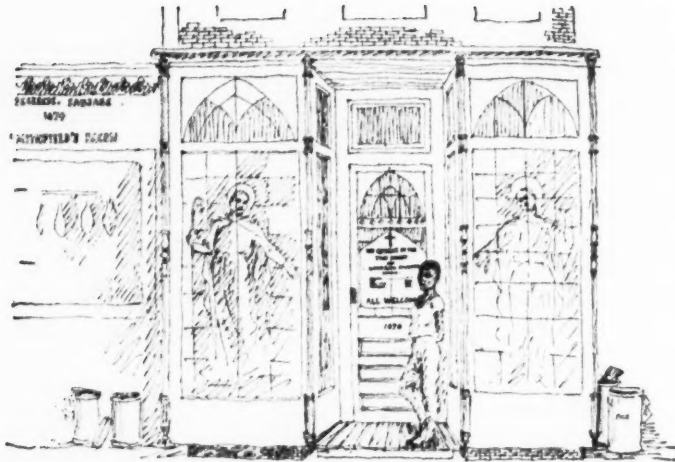
RAIDERS from another turf may appear in a jalopy or on foot. Juvenile gang warfare starts with a series of sneaks (raids) in which three or four members of one gang catch one or two members of another and rough them up. These guerrilla operations culminate, unless Kenny and his associates can head it off, in a major battle with from a dozen to sixty on a side.

When Kenny took up his work there were three or four big battles a year. The white and Puerto Rican gangs call them "rumbles." The American Negroes of Brooklyn and Central Harlem speak of "bopping." One gang will "come down" on another, or "turn it on."

The girls act as mobile scouts for their boy friends, and carry news and rumors of warfare from one turf to another. Some even carry weapons for the boys, as the police hesitate to search them.

Kenny was playing pool with some of his boys one night when a breathless Cougar entered to say that some obscenity Wasps had pulled a sneak and caught one of their cats down the street. Kenny joined in the run toward the scene. By the time they reached the spot it was over. The next day a lad said to him approvingly, "Kenny, I hear you went down with the fellows last night."

Most of the dozen fights at which Kenny has been a witness have been sneaks, but one battle at which he was pres-



ent might have had serious consequences. A dozen Wasps armed with clubs, bats, knives, and one zipgun arrived on foot. Some of the Cougars split the scene and others held their ground, pulling out their switchblades or picking up sticks and garbage cans to return the fire.

Kenny was standing at the corner, chatting with another street-club worker, whom we will call Jack. "I was new at the work," Kenny said later, "and I had the naïve idea that we could just say, 'Well, fellows, let's call this off,' and the cats would quit fighting. I started to move toward the fracas, but Jack grabbed me by the elbow. He had been a peripheral gang member himself when he was a kid and he knew better. 'There's nothing you can do now,' he told me. As I found out, once a bop really starts even the most even-tempered of your boys will shove you aside. About all you can do then is wait around and take any casualties to the hospital; by this time the neighbors will have called the cops."

As with many boyish scraps, an inventory showed little damage after the sound and fury had died down. The zipgun failed to explode and when the attackers withdrew the Cougars found their wounds amounted to a few lumps.

The home-made pistol called a zipgun may be carved from wood, with a length of piping for a barrel and a spring or rubber band arranged so as to explode a .22 cartridge. Another variety is a toy pistol similarly made lethal. The zipgun is almost as national a phenomenon as delinquency. Last November

Kenny testified before a Senate committee investigating juvenile delinquency, and showed the members a number of zipguns from a Washington police collection. The Cougars saw newspaper photographs of the incident. "Why, Kenny," said one when he got back to Bedford-Stuyvesant, "that's my gun you got in the picture." Kenny had a hard time convincing the lad he hadn't snatched it and carried it to Washington.

How to Turn It Off

THE Youth Board workers mediate before things reach the switchblade stage. When a major gang fight is in the offing there can be no hiding it. The tension in both turfs is electric. The smaller children and girls usually disappear from the streets, and the older boys glance over their shoulders as they walk.

"Even inside reform schools," says Kenny, "Cougars will fight Wasps when their pals are fighting outside. Mail and messages are screened but the news gets through by some kind of grapevine. Perhaps a boy is refused permission to visit home, and he senses that 'it's on.'"

The place at which a peace conference is to be held is kept secret from the gangs. In one instance a worker brought two Wasp leaders in his car to pick up Kenny and two Cougars on a corner. They drove around, listening to the car radio and stopping now and then for coffee or Cokes. By the time the party reached the restaurant where discussions were to take

place, the boys were passing one another cigarettes.

Sometimes this "softening-up" procedure doesn't succeed, and the workers have to let the leaders talk their grievances out. The original cause has long been forgotten. Perhaps, weeks earlier, some cat called another "chicken." One leader told Kenny, after the Senate hearing, "It's true, like you said in the paper, we don't know what the hell we're fighting about."

If the mediation succeeds, the leaders carry back oral terms of the truce. Once the boys put the treaty in writing, to this effect: "As witnessed by So and So, the Cougars and Wasps are no longer fighting. The leaders are to announce this to the members, and if any incident [*i.e.*, caused by hotheads] occurs after this, there is to be another meeting."

One way of avoiding war is to turn the conflict into a "fair one." A fair one is a fist fight on neutral ground between two leaders, or between members with a grudge. Cats from both gangs watch, and if one of the knights breaches the rules it is likely to turn into a general fight after all.

The Cougars' Turf

KENNY learned that the Cougar turf comprised an area of three long blocks by seven short, plus an ill-defined sphere of influence outside. Five other Youth Board workers were assigned to as many other gang turfs in Bedford-Stuyvesant. That section has overflowed the two avenues that once constituted its boundaries and gave it its name. Bedford-Stuyvesant now covers between four and five square miles, roughly twelve long blocks by twenty-four short, and is one of New York's regions of highest delinquency.

The Bedford-Stuyvesant population is virtually 100 per cent American Negro. Some of the shopkeepers are white, but most of them live elsewhere. It was formerly a white upper-middle- and middle-class area and its old respectability still clings to many neighborhoods. There are churches with large congregations, such as the Church of God, whose minister is Kenny's father.

The particular province assigned to Kenny is a "deprived" neighborhood of old brownstone and brick row buildings, all now room-

ing houses or cold-water flats. In some of the row houses, railroad flats run from front to back. Many of the brownstones, designed to house three families, one to a floor, now hold as many as seven—two to a floor and one in the basement. The rows of stoops and garbage cans are broken by small shops and storefront churches. The Church of the True Christ and Universal Salvation may have a congregation of twenty or thirty and a part-time minister who supports himself as a janitor in Manhattan.

THE Cougar turf is a cut above a slum. Family incomes may range from a comfortable \$3,000 a year down to the subsistence level supplied by the relief agencies. Flat rents range from \$20 to \$40 a month, and "furnished apartments" may bring \$25 a week.

The children in the Cougars' turf have little choice but to play in their homes or in the street. A nearby public school provides an excellent community center, with teachers and recreation specialists on duty in the evening, but it is in Wasp territory and the Cougars keep away. Gang tensions create artificial shortages, as Kenny puts it. On winter nights the neighborhood candy store is an oasis, one of the few sources of light and warmth.

The Cougars suffered more from boredom than from poverty, Kenny found. Many of the older boys were out of school and out of work, and went home only to sleep. Over a coffee, one told Kenny:

"Now, for example, you take an average day. What happens? We come down to the obscenity restaurant and we sit in the restaurant and sit and sit. All right, say, after a couple of hours in the obscenity restaurant, maybe we'll go to an obscenity poolroom, shoot a little pool—that is if somebody's got the obscenity money. Okay, a little pool, come back. By this time the restaurant is closed. We go in the obscenity candy store, sit around the candy store for a while, and that's it, that's all we do, man."

For relief from the tedium, they turn to mischief and bopping. A tenth or more of the Cougars are delinquents—given to truancy, drunkenness, stealing, or assault. Drug addiction, a curse in other gang areas, is not a problem with the Cougars, although Kenny knows

some of his boys have been experimenting with marijuana.

The Youth Club workers take particular pains to gain the confidence of the leaders. A cat becomes a leader because he is smarter than the others, or more aggressive, or both. Here is a description of one, as Kenny once set it down:

"Fred is a youngster of seventeen who attends a vocational high school, studying wood-working. He is about five feet ten or eleven, weighs about 165 pounds, dark complexion, isn't the biggest youngster in the group, but is acknowledged by all as the best fighter.

"He is not authoritative in his dealings with the group members and it is very difficult to observe him functioning as a leader. The boys simply do whatever he does and acquiesce to whatever he suggests.

"He lets it be known from time to time what he thinks is best in any situation and this then is immediately acted upon. He doesn't bully any of the youngsters except for the one scapegoat who is bullied by everyone.

"Fred comes from a lower-middle-class family consisting of a mother, father, two brothers, and a sister. His older brother, now twenty and in the Army, was formerly a leader of the group. His younger brother is a member of a junior club. His father works as a truck-driver; his mother does occasional housework.

"The youngster, generally speaking, is an easy-going, friendly kind of person. His techniques in controlling groups are—to get technical—essentially non-directive."

Before Kenny met the Cougars the gang had a vertical organization. There were about sixty members, of whom fifteen or twenty constituted the active core. The Seniors were from seventeen to nineteen, the Juniors fifteen and sixteen, the Cubs from twelve to

fourteen, and the Tims (from Tiny Tims) were ten and eleven. If one of the older members was insulted or attacked by thirteen-year-olds from a rival gang, retaliation was beneath the dignity of the Seniors, and the Cougar Cubs were sent out to take care of them.

After the Battle of Prospect Park, the district attorney and police began skimming off the leaders and sending them to reform school, so that the Cougars became a loose horizontal organization of half a dozen autonomous clubs or cliques that united as Cougars only for a general fight. In juvenile gangdom the organization, the rules, the club names, and even the slang are constantly shifting.

Kenny decided to work closely with the Angels, an active club in the sixteen to eighteen age-range. He found the Angels' business sessions, held in somebody's home, were pretty stuffy. The weekly dues were about twenty-five cents, and sooner or later everybody fell behind. The leader was a taciturn, serious-minded young person who bore down heavily on his fellow members to pay up. Whenever his opinion was asked, Kenny tried to lighten the talk, give the rank and file more say, and turn discussions toward movies, dances, and athletics.

Social lite revolved, and still does, around sessions (from jam sessions). A session (or set, for short) is usually held in somebody's railroad flat. In winter, the boys wear their coats and hats, partly so they won't be stolen and partly to be prepared for a quick exit. At one session, the girl wore long dresses and the boys kept on their wraps.

There are always boys "on the humble" at the door, trying to talk their way into a session, or to borrow from their friends. The door fee is usually thirty-five or fifty cents, and Cokes and Pepsis are sold. If someone tries to shove his way inside, a fight may follow. Stepped-on toes also may start the bopping, or there may be a raid by a rival



gang, bent on "turning the session out." The girls are mauled a good deal, but appear to welcome caveman tactics.

The gang drink is Sneaky Pete, a generic name for wines that can be bought for as little as thirty-five cents a pint. Little wine appears at the sessions: a bottle would be snatched and quickly emptied.

"You come already high, if you're a drinker," Kenny explains. "Bedford-Stuyvesant boys who go in for drinking start as young as fourteen years."

He impressed the Cougars by bringing his wife, Pauline, to a number of sessions. She is an editorial worker on the magazine *Our World*, and is four years younger than Kenny. "The first time I brought her one of the boys said to me, 'Kenny, you can't have much respect for your wife, bringing her to an obscenity session like this.' I said, 'I don't know quite what you mean. Everybody is nice to her.' I overheard another fellow say I evidently was no cop, because no cop would bring his wife."

The dancing at Cougar sessions falls into two distinct types—fast and slow. The fast dancing is done to a jump tune or mambo, and amounts to a contest between partners, both the boy and girl doing improvised solos without touching. At the end, they turn on their heels without a word. If the girl has outdone the boy, his fellow cats may tell him, "She burned your eyes," but if his performance has been superior the admiring comment is, "Man, you whaled."

Slow dancing (fishin') is done to blues, usually the record of a song by a popular male quartet, such as the Orioles or the Velvets. Reversing the fast dance procedure, the partners move not only cheek to cheek but make bodily contact wherever possible. When the dance is over, they abruptly break away.

Making a Rep

KENNY learned that the Cougars set great store by "rep" or status. A group, for example, tried to distinguish itself by being the "baddest" gang. Kenny convinced the Angels that they could gain rep in another way—by sponsoring a dance in a large hall, with an orchestra, a check room, and police protection against crashers.

The Angels needed club rooms of their own. With Kenny's help, they arranged to use the cellar in a member's house, painted it, and equipped it with a record-player. But at ten o'clock, when the cats were just getting started, the neighbors wanted to sleep. So the quarters were lost, and they went back to meeting in one another's flats.

Kenny knew he was making progress in turning the Angels toward peace when he overheard one say, "I tell you, man, when those double-obscenity Wasps come down I ain't going to be here. I'm going to be parked safe in bed."

Once when the Deacons, a rival gang, threatened to turn out an Angels' party, several of the boys agreed with Kenny's suggestion that they get the cops on their side. With one of the leaders standing by the telephone and prompting him, Kenny called the police and asked that the neighborhood be patrolled. It was never clear whether the Deacons were discouraged by the prowler car or changed their mind, but there was no bopping that night.

THE Youth Board conducts its gang work under the name of the Council of Social and Athletic Clubs. This is more than a euphemism, since with a change of direction a street gang does become social and athletic. In winter Kenny promotes basketball games, dances, and trips to exhibits. In summer the gangs often observe an unofficial truce and allow others to cross their boundaries. That makes possible trips to baseball games, picnics, and rides on Sheephead Bay. Coney Island is neutral territory.

There's a stain on the back seat of the 1948 Buick that Kenny bought from his father.

"It's blood," he explained. "I have a rule when I take the kids out—no zipguns, no switchblades, and no Sneaky Pete. One fellow smuggled in a switchblade and cut himself. I had to take him to the hospital."

"Once a boy brought along a half-gallon of wine when we started on a picnic. I took it back to the shop and told the man he was likely to get into trouble for selling to minors."

Somehow, on his small salary, Kenny manages to keep an outboard speedboat and a twenty-foot cabin cruiser on Sheephead Bay. "A picnic or a ride on the bay opens a new world to Bedford-Stuyvesant kids," he says.

When a street club adopts jackets it's about ready to go smooth—and it might as well, because the club name is emblazoned across the back and the member's name across the left breast, for the police and all to see. The Angels were among the first in Bedford-Stuyvesant to adopt them, along with rules of conduct designed to protect the club name. A member was prohibited from wearing his jacket unless he was otherwise neatly dressed. He might not get drunk while he was an official representative of the club at a party, and only one girl might wear his jacket.

KENNY now has under his wing a junior club, the Bulls, boys of thirteen to fifteen. Every Saturday evening there's a meeting in somebody's flat at which Kenny shows the boys Western or detective movies lent by the Youth Board. If there's tension among the senior Cougars he turns the projector over to a volunteer counselor and stays near the scene of trouble.

A Cougar would no more wear a zoot suit than say "goil." The clothes-conscious try to resemble Harvard undergraduates as closely as they can. Their word for it is "conservatism," and they favor "dirty gray" (charcoal gray). An occasional red shirt is not frowned on, but sharp clothes are out. In cool weather the cats affect Ike jackets or lumberjacks or the leather kind. Their shoes are loafers, moccasins, or purposely scuffed whites.

The girls also go in for scuffed shoes, usually with bobby-sox. In winter it's blouses and skirts, the latter replaced in summer by slacks, generally of denim.

The Cougarettes or Cougar-debs have their own clubs. Often a girls' club (sister club) is under the wing of a boys' clique, whose members are expected to invite them to sessions or movies. If such affiliations cross turf lines they may lead to fights. Some Bedford-Stuyvesant girls like to foment wars, but on balance the feminine influence is exerted for law and society. When a fight threatens, a Cougarette is likely to take her fellow by the arm and lead him away.

Kenny has helped a number of the "baddest" boys. One of these was Arnold, leader of a cub group, who had a notorious police record. He had been kicked out of public school and had been sent to reform school for assault.

"Arnold was already a legendary character," Kenny told me. "When some lad shot at him on the street, he got his father's gun and rang the bell at the boy's house. The boy came to the window, and they both fired their guns point blank. Fortunately neither was hit.

"After his second term in reform school I made a special effort to win Arnold's confidence. Gradually he saw that the things he was doing worried his parents and were hurtful to him. He was going with a girl who had aborted a child of his. I helped him get a job. He kept insisting that he didn't want a job, but after he took it he got several promotions. He married the girl, and I was best man at the wedding. Now they have a baby and Arnold is pretty well set. He doesn't hang around the streets any more. His only trouble is that occasionally he drinks too much.

"Here was a guy that everyone had considered hopeless."

On the Right Track

WE WERE walking along a dark street one evening. Kenny and a tall youth in a leather jacket greeted each other warmly. "This is one of my cats," said Kenny, introducing us. The tall youth flashed a wide grin. Kenny asked paternally how the boy and his younger brother were getting along. Pretty well, it seemed. As the lad moved on, Kenny's final words to him were "Take care of yourself, man, you hear?"

Kenny explained that the cat was an Angel growing out of the Cougars. "Gang life has no pull after age nineteen," he said. "They aren't graduating into adult gangs. We don't like to take too much credit for it. Perhaps it's partly growing up, and the fact that the Army takes a good many away.

"Some men hanging around the corner are supposed to be numbers writers. They may have been in the Cougars before my time, but I never knew them. They aren't my boys."

Among the sixty-odd boys who are still Cougars there is less gang-fighting, and less individual trouble with the police, than when Kenny was first assigned. At this writing there has been no real bop for more than a year. And the Bulls, the youngsters of thirteen to fifteen, have never fought at all.

Kenneth Evans Marshall was born in South Brooklyn in 1925. When he was nine years

old, the family moved to Bedford-Stuyvesant. There he went to Boys' High School, and knew the gang leaders of the time by sight and reputation. They regarded him, as they did other well-behaved children, as goody-goody, and let him alone.

At New York's City College his studies were interrupted by the war. While he was serving in the then segregated Air Force as a radio operator, he had a lot of time to ponder his own adjustment to life and the problems of others. Once he had his bachelor's degree, he got a job as social investigator for the New York City Welfare Department. In 1950 he saw a notice of the Youth Board's openings for street-club workers. That job, he knew, was for him.

The "street-club worker" approach to juvenile gangs has been used in other cities. Indeed, the pioneer was Clifford R. Shaw of the Illinois State Department of Public Welfare, whose Chicago Area Project, organized more than twenty years ago, was described by John Bartlow Martin in *Harper's* in May 1944. Shaw's men were "alley-wise," got the boys' confidence and did not squeal on them. His workers included an ex-convict and an ex-delinquent.

It was in 1944 that the Welfare Council of New York established a central Harlem project based on the Chicago plan, working

with isolated groups. When the New York City Youth Board, with state co-operation, set up its own gang project in 1950, the plan was broadened so as to deal with key trouble-making gangs on an area basis. The police and prosecuting officials advise and co-operate with the board.

Officials of the Youth Board make no broad claims of success either for the over-all work on juvenile delinquency in the city or for the street-club project. (About \$120,000 a year, or 5 per cent of the board's budget, goes to the Council of Social and Athletic Clubs.) Statistically, juvenile delinquency showed an increase in New York City during 1953, reversing the downtrend of the previous five years. In the tough areas where the Youth Board operates, however, the increase was considerably less than elsewhere in the city. Ralph W. Whelan, the board's executive director, puts it this way: "We don't claim to have all the answers, but we think we're on the right track."

There is, of course, no single solution to the delinquency problem. Nationally, social workers expect juvenile crime to continue to increase in the next five years. But the street workers make a valuable contribution, and the country can well use more Kenny Marshalls—neither stuffy nor pious, but nonetheless dedicated men.



(The following letter was written from Paris last February by a French priest who)
(was a missionary in the Far East for twenty-six years until he was expelled from)
(China by the Communists at the end of 1953. The letter was sent to an)
(American priest who, with the author's permission, passed it on to Harper's.)

What I Saw in Red China

by a Catholic Missionary

MY DEAR COLLEAGUE: You ask me to write at length about China. I write to you as a priest and an ex-missionary to China. This does not mean that I would tell the same thing to everybody, especially to laymen; nor that I would tell it to any missionary to China; nor even that the majority of them would agree with me.

Under the Communist government China is solidly unified and well organized. The entire country down to the last frontier village obeys the government. There are no more bandits: peace reigns everywhere. The army is unified and at the disposal of the central government which replaces and changes generals at will. The soldiers are very well disciplined; they no longer steal or loot, and they show great courtesy toward the people. As a matter of fact, they are seldom seen in the countryside, since they have nothing to do there any more.

The administration is perfectly organized from top to bottom. It is absolutely honest. No more venality, especially since the great administrative purge three years ago. No doubt perfection is not of this world, but I imagine that under the present regime it would be more difficult to buy a Chinese official than an official in the Western countries. This shows how true it is that fear is the beginning of wisdom.

The administration, it is true, is terribly bureaucratic, with all the defects inherent in the system. One example: you know the village of X, seat of the under-prefecture of

Y. Well, in the "Bank of the People" alone there are about fifty employees. For all the bureaus of this little under-prefecture there are about three hundred officials in the village alone, not counting the considerable number dispersed in all the districts. Is this administration efficient? Yes, in spite of the bureaucratic heaviness. All orders from above are transmitted rapidly and obeyed in general down to the last rung.

What keeps the administration efficient in spite of its bureaucratic heaviness is the auto-criticism (*tzu-ngo-p'i-p'ing*) which naturally goes along with the mutual criticism (*hu-hsiang-p'i-p'ing*) requested and desired by the government. This auto-criticism is a very mixed matter. There is the attitude of the novice who in full sincerity accuses himself of his faults in public. There is also, very frequently, opportunism: "I have made a mistake; it will be known; it is already known by some. I must be quick! Let me accuse myself and confess everything; it will put me in a position of virtuous penitence."

There is also the auto-criticism prescribed on the program which everyone must make when his time comes. There is the imposed confession following accusation by colleagues (accusations made more or less spontaneously by those who have the charity to help you on the right road). Whatever the immediate motive, the *primum movens* is certainly fear of the police or fear of public accusation. Imagine trying to make people practice auto-criticism (helped by mutual criticism) as a method of

asceticism in the monasteries with the love of God as a motive! It would never succeed, at least not as a habitual method over a long period. The general chapters of the religious orders are nothing in comparison with the meetings of Communist groups.

The New Status of Women

PROSTITUTION has completely disappeared from China. You can't find a brothel anywhere. Has women's situation been bettered? Yes and no. No—because instead of considering a woman as a mother and the mistress of a home, the Communists want to push her into the same positions that men hold, without considering differences of sex and psychological attitudes. Women are put to physical work in the fields, the forests, the factories, and the officials try to make it look like a promotion. Yes—because a husband does not dare treat his wife brutally any more, nor does a father dare dispose of his daughter according to his whims.

Women and girls no longer let themselves be pushed around. They have become entirely intractable. They have gone from one extreme to another. Today the fair sex is going through a real madness, asserting its liberty by all kinds of extravagances, especially divorce. A real epidemic of divorces (which the government approves) is passing over China. For a yes, a no, an insult, a mere nothing, divorce is demanded; remarriage follows; then divorce again. It has gone so far it has begun to threaten society. People of forty and over were very unhappy about it, and around the second half of 1953 a reaction toward more severity began to appear in official media.

One of the greatest reforms is the disappearance of opium. Maybe there are still some people who have opium hidden somewhere, but they dare not take it out, sell it, give it away, or even use it themselves as medicine. Informing on opium smokers goes on everywhere, even in the family circle. And this mutual accusation, one of the forms of Communist dialectics, together with severe punishments, has been the strongest reason for the disappearance of opium smoking. The results are surely good, but the means are drastic and immoral.

As far as I am able to see, the greatest

success of the new regime has been making a previously quite egotistic people, whose former government was so corrupt, so primarily concerned with the common good. Government for the people is not a vain slogan in China, I assure you. It is true! From top to bottom the government machine is turned toward the people's good. The synchronized press, the radio, films, brain-washing, everything, is directed toward the good of the people, away from individual egotism.

I know, it is the common good according to the Communists: the good of humanity in general, not the good of the individual man, James or John. If the political line demands it, they will kill James and put down John. Nevertheless, the whole country is being educated toward a theory and pushed into a practice closer to Christianity than the ancient *fa-ts'ai* (become rich) first and last. There are, I think, some real elements awaiting future Christianization in China.

The Question of Freedom

IS THERE freedom in China? Freedom of the press, of opinions, of speech, of association, of religion, as we understand it in the West? No, not in the least! Naturally everybody suffers from this in a different measure, according to his class, culture, condition of life. The small peasant, the pagan who lives to eat and drink, does not feel the same oppression as a priest or even as an ordinary simple Christian. Everything is relative. Consequently, one must not believe everything that is said, that the government is hated by the people.

First of all, how many people do any of us see? Some dozens of persons in one little district. And who, even if he does hate the government, would ever dare say so? I think that in general missionaries judge the whole people too much in terms of their own mentality and sentiments and those of their Christians who feel the persecutions more sharply. I am inclined to think that the majority of little people in China, peasants and workers, accept the Communist government but vaguely desire some small modifications in the regime: fewer directives, more liberty.

There is not the smallest sign of a revolutionary movement against the government. It would be quite impossible first of all, be

cause of the police action which reaches everywhere. Besides, in my opinion, the people do not want to make a revolution. About Chiang Kai-shek one does not hear a word. He is finished. If there is ever a revolution, it will be against the kolkhozes (collective farms). However the Reds are very much aware of this and are advancing toward collectivization of the soil very prudently.

Catholic Life in Red China

WHAT about Catholic life? Some people think that nothing is left of it and if one had a chance to begin again, it would be from a complete *tabula rasa*. Not at all! In general both the clergy and the faithful still hold in spite of the individual defections inevitable in such a terrible attack. Among the Christians, the young are naturally the more shaken. But I do not think they have apostatized in any serious number. They live—at least a good number of them—in a kind of spiritual neutrality, waiting to see how the thing is going to end.

All the old Christians stick to it faithfully in general. Many for lack of *cura spiritualis* may have become luke-warm, but all that is essential is still there. The young—if I may judge from what I saw in the diocese of X—are not so much under the influence of the Reds as is usually said. Many came to confession to me from time to time. You know the village of X; we could say Mass every day but absolutely no form of *ministerium animarum* was allowed, not even confessions, which we did however hear in secret.

During the week there was almost nobody in church: about thirty women and girls, some men. But on Sundays—out of a congregation of some 2,000 baptized persons, a sizable number of whom found it morally impossible to go to church—about 700 to 800 Christians came to Mass. On the great feasts the church was filled to the dome and sometimes the number of communicants reached 350 to 400, in spite of the fact that confessions had to be heard secretly. On all Sundays and feast days, the police would walk around in the church, up and down, smoking cigarettes, spitting on the floor, and taking note of who was there.

For more than a year, by all kinds of means—including prison—the police tried to rouse

the people (Christian and non-Christian) in the village of X against me. A complete failure. Always and everywhere they met the same passive resistance, that invincible force of inertia. Finally they were reduced to the last resort—chasing me out of the country themselves. Even if in some Christian centers, they have succeeded in rousing the people against the priests, it was always done through sheer terror, and done as a mere formality by the people. All the people who took part in it have, at the first chance that presented itself, done full penance for it.

So much for the laity. What about the clergy? In general it is very, very good, and less afraid now than in the beginning. In our diocese of X, the clergy is extremely good without the slightest compromise. I do not think that one single priest, even among the most advanced ones, ever separated himself from Rome. However, a small minority thinks that, in order to save religion and gain time, it may be advisable to accept (externally and *pro forma* only, as our Chinese can do so well) a certain collaboration with the government. I think, however, that their number is dwindling more and more. It was Pope Benedict XV and, most of all, Pius XI who saved China from schisms, and after them, as their great instrument, Monsignor Costantini. The great motive on which the Reds play is nationalism. But the Chinese clergy (even if they have grievances against some foreign priests) know only too well that it is Rome who wants a Chinese clergy, Rome who pushed them ahead, Rome who is their support. Even if they are anti-foreign, they are pro-Roman.

The future is in God's hands. Humanly speaking, everything depends on the duration of this trial. Communism fights against truth and the spirit with all its powers. If this lasts another twenty or thirty years without respite, naturally only some broken pieces of Christianity will remain. But this is not our business, except that we must pray.

China and Russia

PROBABLY you would like to ask, is Chinese communism really the same as Russian? The politicians, especially the English, say it is not, and they think we must try to approach the Chinese in a friendly way to attract them to our side. I wonder how

these politicians can know this and on what they base their opinion. I can judge only from the words and facts I could hear and observe. All these go to show that the actual leaders of China are profoundly Marxist in their mentality and agree with the Russians in all their national and international activities. All the newspapers, public speeches, the school program, in a word the whole formidable indoctrination effort which has been made, proves the closest unity of ideas.

The co-operation of the Russian technicians is considerable, and the most gifted students in Chinese universities are sent to the U.S.S.R. to finish their schooling. The move toward collectivism, the kolkhozes, industrialization by a five-year plan, are all

copied from Russian prototypes. The Korean affair proved that Mao Tse-tung takes his directives from Moscow. Whatever the ordinary man can see and hear brings him to the conclusion that there is complete union of thought and action.

Are there secret ruptures? A Beria behind Mao Tse-tung? Rumor has it that Lin Piao, one of the great generals, is opposed to the Russians. But nobody really knows. It is possible that in time China may develop a Chinese communism. But one does not get the idea that the Chinese are afraid of the Russians. They are surely in a much better position than the satellite countries of Eastern Europe, because of their great number. And I think that Russia treats them with care.

Go Get the Goodly Squab

SYLVIA PLATH

GO GET the goodly squab in gold-lobed corn
And pluck the droll-flecked quail where thick they lie,
Go reap the round blue pigeons from roof ridge,
But let the fast-feathered eagle fly.

Let the fast-feathered eagle fly
And the skies crack through with thunder;
Hide, hide, in the deep nest
Lest the lightning split you asunder.

Go snare the sleeping bear in leaf-lined den
And trap the muskrat napping in slack sun,
Go dupe the dull sow lounging snout in mud,
But let the galloping antelope run.

Let the galloping antelope run
And the snow blow up behind;
Hide, hide, in the safe cave
Lest the blizzard drive you blind.

Go cull the purple snails from slothful shells
And bait the drowsing trout by the brook's brim,
Go gather idle oysters from green shoals,
But let the quicksilver mackerel swim.

Let the quicksilver mackerel swim
Where the black wave topples down;
Hide, hide in the warm port
Lest the water drag you to drown.



The Death of Lady Mondegreen

Sylvia Wright

Drawings by Bernarda Bryson

WHEN I was a child, my mother used to read aloud to me from Percy's *Reliques*, and one of my favorite poems began, as I remember:

Ye Highlands and ye Lowlands,
Oh, where hae ye been?
They hae slain the Earl Amurray,
And Lady Mondegreen.

I saw it all clearly. The Earl had yellow curly hair and a yellow beard and of course wore a kilt. He was lying in a forest clearing with an arrow in his heart. Lady Mondegreen lay at his side, her long, dark brown curls spread out over the moss. She wore a dark green dress embroidered with light green leaves outlined in gold. It had a low neck trimmed with white lace (Irish lace, I think). An arrow had pierced her throat: from it blood trickled down over the lace. Sunlight coming through the leaves made dappled shadows on her cheeks and her closed eyelids. She was holding the Earl's hand.

It made me cry.

The poem went on to tell about the Earl Amurray. He was a braw gallant who did various things, including playing at the bar, which, I surmised, was something lawyers did in their unserious moments (I grew up during prohibition, though I was against prohibition and for Governor Smith). The poem also said that he was the queen's love, and that long would his lady look o'er the castle down before she saw the Earl Amurray come

sounding through the town. Nothing more was said about Lady Mondegreen.

But I didn't feel it was necessary. Everything had been said about Lady Mondegreen. The other ladies may have pretended they loved the Earl, but where were they? The queen was probably sitting in Dunfermline town drinking the blood red wine along with the king (he was in "Sir Patrick Spens"). As for the Earl's wife, hiding in the castle in perfect safety and pretending to worry about him, it was clear she only married him so she could be Lady Amurray. She was such a sissy she probably didn't even look down very hard—she was scared she'd fall through the crenellations of the battlements. As a matter of fact, she looked like a thin wispy girl I once socked in the stomach while I was guarding her in basketball because she kept pushing me over the line when the gym teacher couldn't see her and who was such a sissy that she fainted dead away so that everybody said I should learn to be a lady when really she was cheating—but I won't go into that. Lady Mondegreen loved the Earl truly, and she was very brave. When she heard that Huntly (the villain) was coming after him, she ran right out of her castle and into the forest to be with him without even stopping to change from her best dress.

By now, several of you more alert readers are jumping up and down in your impatience to interrupt and point out that, according to the poem, after they killed

the Earl of Murray, they *laid him on the green*. I know about this, but I won't give in to it. Leaving him to die all alone without even anyone to hold his hand—I won't have it.

The point about what I shall hereafter call mondegreens, since no one else has thought up a word for them, is that they are better than the original.

Take Hizeray. Hizeray is that huge hairy muscular Etruscan in the *Lays of Ancient Rome* who was such a demon with the broadsword and who committed one of the great betrayals of history. If Hizeray had been there, Horatius couldn't have held the bridge a minute. Horatius was very brave, but Hizeray was bigger. If not, why was he the first person Lars Porsena of Clusium thought of, when he swore by the Nine Gods that the great house of Tarquin should suffer wrong no more?

And named a trysting-day,
And bade his messengers ride forth,
East and west and south and north,
To summon Hizeray.

Hizeray was hard to find or the messengers wouldn't have been told to go in so many directions, but he had no excuse. The messengers blew so many trumpets that tower and town and cottage heard the blast. I hoped Hizeray would rush in at the last moment and knock Horatius into the Tiber. (I was on Lars Porsena of Clusium's side, though you're not supposed to be, because his name was so much better than anyone else's.) But he never did. When they say

Shame on the false Etruscan
Who lingers in his home,
When Porsena of Clusium
Is on the march for Rome—

they mean Hizeray.

Then there is Harold. You know Harold: "Our Father who art in heaven, Harold be thy Name." It's not one I would have picked myself, but if He has to have a name, Harold will do.

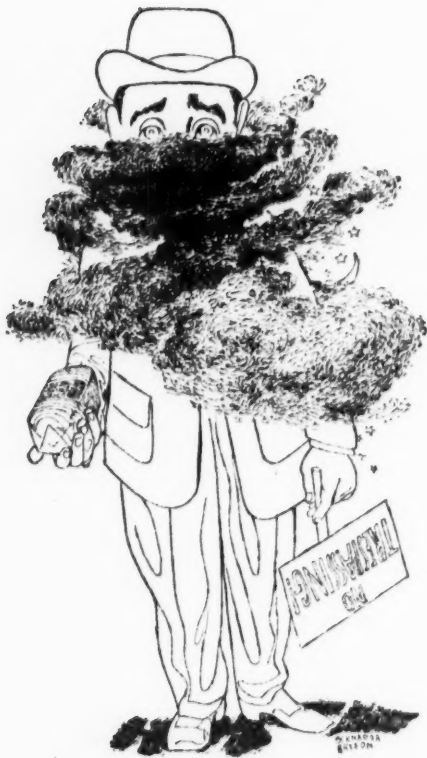
Harold can do extraordinary things. There's a hymn which tells about this. As it's printed in the book, it says that He "moves in a mysterious way, His wonders to perform." Actually, of course, what it really says is that Harold "moves in a mysterious way—He wanders down a horn."

You must pray to Harold if you want something very specific. For instance, if you have discovered how terribly hard it is to meet somebody there, you say to Harold, "Lead us not into Penn Station." At the same time, Harold will protect you from those jittery, unreliable New York, New Haven, and Hot-foot trains. They aren't so dangerous when they're coming into nice motherly old Gran Central.

Even the mizz doesn't scare Harold. The mizz is a sort of elemental protoplasm, which looks like a thick, pulpy, shifting fog. It is inhabited by all sorts of strangely shaped, white, squidgy animals, who moan quietly to themselves from time to time. The mizz is in the Evening Prayer Service: "Let the sea make a noise, and all that in the mizz."

IF you decide that Harold is your shepherd, you can be sure of being looked after. If He can't be there Himself, He will get in Good Mrs. Murphy and "Surely Good Mrs. Murphy shall follow me all the days of my life." I *knew* Mrs. Murphy, and I can't think of anyone I'd rather have follow me, though, knowing her, I think she would more likely be several blocks ahead. She could do almost as many things as Harold. She told fortunes in tea leaves, baked delicious bread in a frying pan, and once when her little boy climbed onto the top of the roof and was too scared to get down, she shouted up to him, "You





come right down, you little Irish basket," and like magic he got over being scared and came right down.

Mrs. Murphy lived in Massachusetts, where they have a holiday in April called Pay Treats Day. It always surprises and infuriates people who come from other states, because, just when they want to go out to buy shoes or bean pots, they find all the shops closed up tight, while the shopkeepers are out paying treats. This reminds me of Paul Revere, who rode to "spread the alarm through every middlesex, village, and farm." Middlesexes look a little like drumlins, if you know what they are, but they are made of hay, and so also look a little like haystacks. There is one middlesex exactly in between each village and farm, and people who are too poor to live in a village or farm live in a middlesex.

And where the middlesexes, villages, and farms slope down to the sea, beyond the dunes, beyond the rocky coast, stands the Donzerly Light on a rugged, lonely promontory. At twilight, the lighthouse keeper turns it on, and it begins to sprout rockets

and bombs which light up the flag pole with the great big American flag which stands right next to it. This is where you go to pledge the legions to the flag.

There's a rude bridge around here somewhere, but I can't quite find it. It's so dilapidated that it touches the flood.

THERE are many mondegreens which give vivid new insights into tired old ideas. With all due respect to Rudy Vallee, "I'm just a vagabond lover" seems a pretty wet notion nowadays. A friend of mine sang it "I'm just a bag of unloving." If you've heard anything at all about psychiatry (who hasn't?) you'll realize that a bag of unloving is a significant and basic concept, and when you get a bag of unloving in search of a sweetheart, you've got the basis for a well-developed neurosis, because as long as you don't have adequate feelings of self-esteem and love yourself, you can't love someone else. See?

There's nothing very interesting about a vagabond lover, except that maybe he didn't like his mother.

The other day I found, on the back page of the *New York Post*, a headline: "Giants Struggle Under Weight of 'Dead' Bats." This is one of the most terrifying scenes I can think of, particularly since there is some doubt as to whether the bats are really dead. That would be bad enough, but if they were all stirring and squeaking—it would daunt even Hizeray.

Then there are those people who, in between radio programs, sing a very precise, cheerful, staccato, little ditty that goes: "In just eight sec-onds, you get H-bomb." After I had counted eight seconds and hadn't got it, I came to enough to realize that they were continuing with "Gas and heart-burn with Alk-aid." So I began to wonder if some of them were singing "aid from" instead of "H-bomb" but at that point the announcer came on and said: "This is New York's fur station," and I knew there was a mondegreen influence loose in that studio.

And some years ago, before World War II, there was a quiet Sunday morning when I discovered that on the front page of the *New York Times* it said: "World Blows Near." As I puzzled over this, I felt, in my room, the faint, fresh breath of the winds which were moving the turning world. Whose world was it? What was going to happen?

You see, if you lay yourself open to mondegreens, you must be valiant. The world, blowing near, will assail you with a thousand bright and strange images. Nothing like them has ever been seen before, and who knows what lost and lovely things may not come streaming in with them? But there is always the possibility that they may engulf you and that you will go wandering down a horn into a mondegreen underworld from which you can never escape. If you want to be safe, guarded from the underworld and the creatures in the mizz, you have only to turn your back. And if you're this type of person, all you'll feel is a faint twinge of heartburn over what you have missed—and you know how to get aid from that.

You have only to decide, as Humpty Dumpty put it (more or less), which is to be master, you or the word.

I am for the word, and against you.

BECAUSE there was a time, before she met the Earl Amurray, when Lady Mondegreen was a bag of unloving. Forlorn, in her embroidered dress, she looked out over her own crenelated battlement, wondering, all alone, about when the world would blow near so she could see what it was all about. Suddenly, beyond the moat, beyond the meadows, there is a stirring like dust far away on the horizon. A trumpet blasts, and she sees that it is the Earl Amurray, riding down the winding road, surrounded by men on prancing horses. Actually, these are Robin Hood's men, on a day off from Sherwood Forest, and the sun is glistening on their tunics of link and green. As the Earl Amurray spies Lady Mondegreen, he and his men spur their horses to a gallop and shout their wild, strange battle cry, "Haffely, Gaffely, Gaffely, Gonward." Lady Mondegreen rushes down the long winding stone stair. She reaches the portcullis and it rises as if by magic. The Earl Amurray seizes her, lifts her onto his horse and they ride over the drawbridge together and out into the world.

At noon, they come to a babbling brook and they stop and tie their horse to a tree. Upstream a little way (*Here it is!*) they see a rude bridge. The Earl Amurray pledges his legions to the flag to April's breeze unfurled and they go off, marching as to war, while the royal master leans against the

phone, waiting for news of their victory.

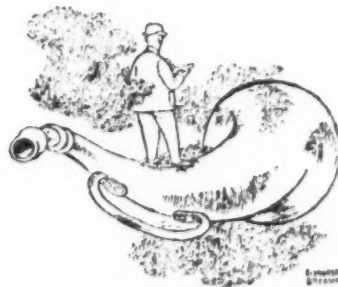
Lady Mondegreen and the Earl Amurray are left alone by the brook. "Tell me," says Lady Mondegreen, as they sit down on the soft greensward in a crowd of gold and affodils. "Tell me [for she is beginning to get a little bit hungry] where is fancy bread?" And at this very moment, Good Mrs. Murphy, who has been riding a suitable distance behind on a sturdy mule, trots up and presents them with an Irish basket, which she has been carrying on her saddlebow. In it, wrapped in a damask napkin, is the fancy bread, a delicious small brown loaf, full of raisins and covered with white frosting.

After they have eaten, they wash their hands in the stream and they rest awhile. Lady Mondegreen lies back on the grass and listens to the soft sounds of the mumble-bees as they muzz among the affodils. The Earl Amurray entertains her by sounding through a tune in his fine baritone voice. Then they ride on. When night falls, they come at last to their own particular middlesex where they camp out under the stars, and Lady Mondegreen, because she loves him, does not say a word when he takes all the covers.

Tragedy lies ahead and there is no one who can save them. Hizeray is cowering in his home under a weight of dead bats. And alas, Harold, who has been watching them from above with a happy smile on His benign face, cannot help. His horn has vanished, and there is no way He can wander down.

But even though the worst will happen, Lady Mondegreen and the Earl Amurray have had their journey together. Even if hereafter they get H-bomb, they have sniffed the delicate fragrance of the affodils, tasted the fancy bread, and slept together in the middlesex. Lady Mondegreen knows what the world is all about.

Lady Mondegreen is me.



*{ Ward-level politics is not for the faint-of-heart in the Windy
City, where corruption and cynicism have combined to dis-
courage reform and only a young, ambitious crusader can
survive the criticism of both his enemies and friends. }*

Merriam of Chicago

Politician Without a Party

Joseph N. Bell

LAST spring a Chicago high-school civics teacher telephoned Alderman Robert Merriam and asked him to speak before her class. The Alderman started through the motions of turning down the request—one of hundreds like it that he receives every year—without wounding her feelings. But the teacher cut him off. “My students,” she said, “don’t believe there is such a thing as an honest politician in Chicago and I want them to see one.” Merriam went.

There are many other people in Chicago who are just as cynical as these youngsters about local politicians. They have good cause for cynicism. But a growing number these days—like the civics teacher—are hopefully eying Bob Merriam. If he can find a political party to claim him, he might be the next mayor of Chicago.

Merriam, for reasons we shall examine, has not endeared himself to either the Republican or Democratic organizations in the course of his rise to public prominence. He seems hardly to be popular with anyone but the doughty citizens who are not yet completely apathetic to Chicago’s municipal decay. How many of these people there are in the bushes, no one knows. But to them, Merriam offers the first rallying point they have had in many years for regrouping against machine politics. And, for this very reason, Merriam faces a tough, uphill fight—not only in seeking the job of mayor but in reconciling his

political views with the problems of established friendships, personal ideals, and party affiliations.

On the surface, Merriam’s political prestige is minor-league. But beneath the surface he is causing reverberations that spread as far as the state and national levels. The first sign of whether or not these tremors have shaken the Democratic party in Illinois will appear this November, when Merriam’s long-time friend, Senator Paul Douglas, comes up for re-election against Republican Joseph T. Meek.

Both Merriam and Douglas stepped into politics via the University of Chicago—Merriam as a political-science graduate and Douglas as a teacher of economics. During this period, Douglas was a close friend of Merriam’s father, Charles, a respected professor at the University; and Douglas preceded the younger Merriam as alderman of Chicago’s Fifth Ward. During his short career, Merriam has followed pretty closely in Douglas’ footsteps, but he has broken with the Democratic party in Chicago while Douglas remains steadfastly loyal. This parting of the ways has faced Merriam with two basic issues: (1) if he comes out openly in the mayoralty contest as a Republican or an Independent before November’s senatorial election, he may hurt Douglas’ chances even more than his defection from the Democrats has already hurt them; and (2) if the Democrats win a smashing victory in November without Merriam, it

will be clear to him that now isn't the best time to buck the organization. So Merriam must watch and wait—continuing to build local (and some national) prestige as the leader of the "good guys" in a struggle of crime *vs.* law-and-order.

The Nine and the Nineteen

CHICAGO has been in the market for a genuine reform candidate for many years. Now may be too late to penetrate the accumulated skepticism of Cook County voters, but Bob Merriam is giving it the old college try; and his enthusiasm, unseasoned as it may often seem, is welcome.

A career in Chicago politics has never been an easy path to a long and peaceful life. In the past five years, five Chicago politicians have been assassinated and another kidnapped (he hasn't been heard from since). The authorities have scored exactly zero in catching the killers. Chicago's most recent political murder was the 1952 shotgun slaying of Charles Gross, a small-time Republican ward committeeman; and the events which followed the Gross murder were what brought Bob Merriam to public attention.

Charley Gross caused more commotion in death than he ever had alive. Though opinion is divided, the consensus seems to be that Gross was killed as a warning to anyone in his ward who might have had the idea of running his own illegal operations outside the Syndicate—a generic term used by Chicagoans for the gangster element which they believe to rule large sections of their city.

Whatever the reason, the murder of Gross was a trigger for the loudest bang to be heard in Chicago for many years. Two organizations to fight gangsterism were formed in the immediate aftermath. The first, known as the Big Nineteen, was made up of business and church leaders, sponsored by the Chicago Association of Commerce and Industry and the Chicago Crime Commission. It was and remains entirely a citizens' group. The second, known as the Big Nine, is officially labeled the Committee for the Investigation of Crime in Politics. Made up of nine aldermen from Chicago's City Council, this group was the brain-child of Merriam and several of his young cohorts. Although Merriam was nudged out of the committee chairmanship

when it was first formed, he has from the beginning been the most vocal and vigorous member.

Before he tangled head-on with crime in politics, however, Bob Merriam had given more than superficial indication that he was no run-of-the-mill big-city politician.

Merriam's background is impressive. He was literally born to politics. His father taught political science to University of Chicago students just a few blocks from Merriam's present home on the south side of Chicago. The elder Merriam, a Bull Moose Republican, was one of the nation's foremost experts on government. Just before he died last year, he and his son had completed seven years of work on a textbook called *The American Government*, which emphasizes the importance of the local unit in the teaching of political science. The elder Merriam twice ran for mayor of Chicago. In 1911 he almost made it, but in 1919 he was snowed under in the primaries. Of his father, Merriam says: "Dad was one of the great idealists of this country. He had an eternal optimism. I hope that some of it has rubbed off on me."

SHORTLY after he received an M.A. in public administration from the University, Merriam entered the Army as a private. He emerged four years later, an officer and veteran of the Battle of the Bulge. The experiences of his unit during the German break-through provided him with the material for a book, *Dark December*, which was written shortly after the war and has now gone through three modest printings. On the wall of Merriam's office hangs a framed letter which reads in part:

Dear Colonel Merriam:

I have just read a copy of your book, *Dark December*. . . . Yours is the most satisfactory war account I have seen. On the whole, I consider it a remarkably accurate document.

DWIGHT D. EISENHOWER

Since Merriam never rose above the rank of major, he considers the title on the President's letter a "battlefield promotion" and plans so to inform the Army if he is ever called back into service.

After the war, Merriam served briefly as

the head of Chicago's Metropolitan Housing Council; and then in 1947 he sought and won the job of alderman from Chicago's Fifth Ward. At the age of twenty-seven, he thus became Chicago's youngest alderman. When Merriam first ran for office, he ran with the backing of the Democratic organization, which had previously sponsored Paul Douglas in the same spot. Between Douglas and Merriam, the office was held by a party man who was dumped by the organization in 1947 in favor of Merriam—who was young, had a fine war record, and had prepared himself for a career in public administration. The Democrats, sadly in need of a few upstanding candidates to dissipate some of the political odors in other parts of the city, at that time embraced Merriam with real affection. So did the Fifth Ward voters. But when Merriam came up for re-election in 1951, the Democratic organization wanted no more of him.

Getting in Wrong with the "Boys"

MERRIAM'S principal offense during these first four years had been his effort to force economic reforms on first a surprised, then an indignant, and finally a reluctant City Council. He spent a full year studying the city budget, coming to the conclusion that about 6½ million dollars were being spent needlessly each year. Although most of the politicians treated Merriam's survey as a huge joke, he was able to gather a handful of young disciples from the City Council who have since come to be known as the Economy Bloc. Of 101 measures for financial reform they offered in 1952, a hundred were rejected; the only one that passed was a gag: it called for an \$8 cut in one budgetary item. But, as of today, more than half the original reforms have been passed, although many were eventually credited to aldermen outside the Economy Bloc.

In addition to his work with the Big Nine and the Committee on Revenue dealing with financial reforms, Merriam is head of the Council's Housing Committee. His critics say that Merriam's other committee work, particularly on housing, has taken a back seat since the Crime Committee turned out to pack such popular appeal. But Merriam's record on housing—even if unspectacular and

including some demolition of slum areas without adequate replacement for the displaced tenants—derives from the ideas he has long been developing in this field. Merriam never overlooks the politically popular cause of slum clearance, but at the same time he is a highly vocal advocate of saving the "Middle Belt" of the city—fifty-six square miles that are now middle-aged neighborhoods.

"It just doesn't make sense," says Merriam, "for us to spend almost \$200 million a square mile to clear and redevelop slums when for a fraction of that amount in public and private money we can save and improve these good neighborhoods which could become slums."

Municipal Mishmash

BUT there are a lot of things about the city of Chicago which don't make sense. For example, the municipal government is composed of a series of fifty separate ward "kingdoms," each represented in the City Council by an alderman. Chicago has the largest council and the most antiquated ward system in the United States, and it has helped nurture machine politics. By contrast, New York has twenty-five aldermen, Philadelphia seventeen, and Los Angeles fifteen.

Merriam estimates that there are ten thousand people directly connected with the political machine in Chicago. "The machine bosses," says Merriam, "are practical enemies of democracy. They tear down respect for government and make a shady business deal out of what should be our revered institutions. Their system can only be destroyed by indignation—long-lasting, determined, deep indignation—from outraged citizens of all political beliefs."

Merriam is new enough, young enough, and possibly naïve enough to believe that such indignation is possible in Chicago. Here he may be a victim of his own judgment. Practical politicians feel that he has no chance for the mayor's job without party support, and that the Democrats might even be able to take the office of alderman away from him if he continues to fight the organization. Conspicuously, he is still an "amateur" politician to the extent of being one of the few who dedicate themselves full-time to the job of being an alderman. Merriam picks up extra

money—over his \$5,000-a-year salary—only by writing and lecturing. For “professionals,” however, there are generally thought to be a number of other ways to make money beyond city salaries and legitimate outside businesses.

Probably the most conventional emolument (and the easiest to justify) is the commission some aldermen receive for insurance sold on city installations. There are also other byways of aldermanic income, most of which grow out of the power of the alderman to approve or disapprove a great many things within his ward. It is rumored, suspected, and occasionally openly charged that some aldermen are paid fees by businessmen to permit such installations as conduits, switch tracks into business establishments, canopies over sidewalks, steam heating tunnels under city property, and lowered curbing for a driveway. When asked why he doesn't bring these things out into the open and stop them, Merriam has answered, “I'll do it the first time the rumors can be proved true—when a businessman in the city of Chicago will sign an affidavit admitting that he has paid this illegal bounty.”

Honesty and the Unknown Cop

BUT this isn't the area of crime in politics with which Merriam is presently primarily concerned. In his own words, “The most frightening part of it is the Syndicate, continually lurking behind the minority coalition clique which really rules Chicago. We, the people . . . cannot get what we want as long as parts of our city government are subject to the Syndicate . . . and our police are busier collecting or protecting than patrolling.”

Chicago's underpaid, understaffed police department is embarrassingly vulnerable to the mobsters. When Merriam asked one policeman what he would do if he saw a hand-book operating on his beat, the cop answered, “I'd leave it alone, because if it's operating in the open it probably has a go-ahead from above and I'd only get in trouble if I pinched it.” For a cop to look on graft as abnormal is hard where such an attitude prevails.

Merriam caused a minor sensation a few months ago, even in blasé Chicago, when he produced a tape-recorded interview with an ex-policeman on his half-hour Sunday evening television show. The cop, dearly known to

the Chicago papers as Policeman X, really blew the lid off corruption within the police department. Among other things, he admitted that he had himself taken protection money from a well-known Chicago gambler.

As a result of this interview, Merriam got into a loud shouting match with State's Attorney John Gutknecht, who demanded that Merriam identify the anonymous cop and produce him for questioning by a Grand Jury. Merriam refused, and so far he has made his refusal stick. His position here—and in similar instances—of refusing full co-operation with law enforcement officials leaves him wide open to criticism; yet the support he has had from the newspapers indicates the degree to which Chicagoans have lost confidence in their law-enforcing agencies.

THE TV show, which went off the air early this spring, was Merriam's idea. Worked out with a local station which gave him time, the program was dropped after nine weeks by mutual consent; Merriam is wise enough to know that citizens can take only so much “exposing” before they become saturated. The show will be revived at a later date; in the meantime, the people who watched it have had plenty to chew on.

In addition to Policeman X and others, Merriam produced a landlady who exposed bribe solicitations from a city building inspector (he was caught demanding the money). Democratic leaders claim that Merriam's parting from the Democratic organization was an outgrowth of this incident. To his embarrassment, the building inspector turned out to be a Fifth Ward civil-service appointee carrying a Merriam endorsement. When this was pointed out to him, according to a Fifth Ward official, Merriam claimed the man was forced on him by the Democratic organization and finally withdrew from it on this issue.

Merriam's TV show also turned up the owner of a tavern building who admitted paying off two health-department inspectors, and a former garageman who said policemen demand a cut on most fees paid for towing service. According to this informant, a police squad can hustle up more than a dozen tow jobs a week and the garages never get one without a payoff—at least they never get the second one.

Yet Merriam feels it is possible to clean up

even a police department as thoroughly immersed in boodling as Chicago's seems to be. He points out that it was accomplished in other cities, notably Cleveland, and that it might be done in four steps:

(1) Get a strong, professionally-trained, thoroughly honest, and completely determined police commissioner;

(2) Pick the worst offender on the force, preferably a big shot, and go after him no-holds-barred;

(3) Get an indictment and then make it stick; this is the only language the grafters can understand: most of the bad ones would then drop out of their own free will; those that remained would have to be dug out like the first one;

(4) Finally, build up morale among those left by showing them an honest desire to establish good wages, promotions on the basis of ability, and rewards for good jobs well done.

And the Mayor, More or Less

MERRIAM believes that a group which controls all illegal operations in Chicago does indeed exist. About the "Syndicate," he says: "It never fights the 'right side'; it won't buck the police force. It goes only where it knows it will get a good reception—where the skids have been greased. The Syndicate is a very thorough and very efficient business operation. Actually it operates some legitimate businesses and has some legitimate investments. That's why it's becoming harder all the time to stamp it out. The only way to stop the Syndicate is to dry up its sources of revenue. Right now the number one source is probably narcotics. Before this year it was gambling."

The relegation of gambling to second place as an income source for the mobsters represents a minor triumph for Mayor Martin Kennelly and the forces of law and order. Kennelly and the federal gambling stamp have pretty well driven open gambling out of Chicago. The other Kennelly accomplishments, though he has also improved civil service considerably, are less impressive. "He has too often," says Merriam, "exercised his constitutional right to do nothing."

Probably no one ever had a finer opportunity to clean up a bad situation than Mar-

tin Kennelly, when he took office eight years ago. A successful and moderately wealthy businessman, he was politically clean and virtually uncommitted when the Democrats selected him. He was swept into office in the backwash of a reform movement sick to death of the Ed Kellys and the Big Bill Thompsons who had ruled Chicago for so many years. But the long succession of Kennelly's wasted opportunities has rankled Merriam sufficiently to lead him into open attack on the Mayor, thus broadening his rift with Chicago Democrats.

Although Kennelly is a shining light compared to the graft-laden regimes that preceded him, he seems better defined as a transition stage between government by machine and government by law. Kennelly has certainly taken steps in the right direction, but the advances have been pretty well lost in more noticeable disputes over crime and corruption. Kennelly's ability to see only what he wants to see has kept him in hot water with the press and the public throughout his years in office; and he also has an unhappy penchant for foot-in-mouth disease, which is sometimes fatal to politicians.

An example gleefully reported by Chicago newspapers was his comment at the first meeting of the Big Nine, when he said, "We must break the alliance between crime and politics in the police department." He later realized what these words implied and visited the City Hall press room to tell reporters that he meant the alliance should be broken "if it exists."

When the Big Nine was activated, Mayor Kennelly said: "This fight against crime has been pretty lonesome. I welcome the support of the City Council now." Kennelly and his immediate underlings then proceeded to throw as many road blocks as possible in the path of the Committee.

Big Nine activities finally ground to a complete standstill on the question of whether or not the Committee could demand that policemen divulge the amount and sources of their incomes. The City's Corporation Counsel, John Mortimer, a good Kennelly man, backed up the policemen who refused to supply such information. Merriam and his group regarded this as so basic an issue that they chose to make an all-out fight.

The problem went to the State Supreme Court, and in March of this year the Court rejected Mortimer's position and ruled that the Big Nine could demand income information from policemen.

This decision not only re-activated the Big Nine but gave it new power and prestige. While the Committee was in limbo, moreover, one of the Democratic members had died and another resigned, throwing the balance of power to Merriam's group. Merriam lost no time—over the screams of the opposition—in calling a meeting of the Big Nine and getting himself elected to the chairmanship. The Committee now doesn't intend to resume hearings until investigations presently under way have produced sufficient evidence—probably late this fall.

Leading the Alderman's Life

THE one adjective that best describes Merriam's appearance is cherubic. He has a round, full, and pleasant face on a middle-sized, well-filled frame. One of his undeniable concessions to the politician's trade is the perpetual smile which seems almost engraved on his features, making him appear seldom to change expression.

Merriam was married after he got into politics. His wife had two children by a previous marriage—a girl, thirteen, and a boy, eleven—to whom Merriam is devoted. The Merriams' first child, a girl, was born this summer. Merriam's wife believes very much in what he is doing, which is fairly necessary in view of the extent to which his work disrupts a quiet and ordered home life. During one recent (and infrequent) evening at home with her husband, Mrs. Merriam counted sixty-four telephone calls.

However, Merriam conducts much of his business a few blocks from home in his "public service office," located on Chicago's East 55th Street, a "transition" neighborhood which is a good example of the Middle Belt Merriam would like to save. Here he holds forth on Tuesday evenings and Saturday mornings; he calls these his "psychiatric hours." Theoretically he is accessible to anyone. Actually, his staff—which includes six people, five of them permitted by his city office and the other paid for from a separate fund—winnow out the visitors and take care

of as many as possible who don't demand personal attention from the alderman. Merriam's South Side office is supported by funds contributed to a public collection in his ward.

There is nothing lush about his quarters. The waiting room furniture consists of two down-at-the-heels davenport, reposing tiredly beneath a cracked looking-glass, a jagged white wall patch, and the inevitable dusty American flag.

WHEN Merriam is in the news, which is frequently, the number of visitors increases materially. People come to him from all over the city and county, and not just from his ward. He has become a sort of father confessor to scores of citizens who have lost confidence in their civic officials. Of course, for every visitor with legitimate ammunition for Merriam's crime-investigating committee, there are hundreds of crackpots and curiosity-seekers, intermixed with people who have everyday problems falling in the routine sphere of their alderman.

Merriam's workaday pre-occupation with the affairs of a corrupt and sprawling city has also, on occasion, involved him in bigger and more perplexing problems. One of these is his relationship to the two men with whom you would expect him to be allied: Paul Douglas and Adlai Stevenson. Ideologically, the three have much in common; but their different levels of political activity commit them to different perspectives on the Chicago scene. Stevenson, after visiting thirty-five foreign countries and forty-two states in the past two years, is understandably more concerned with national and international affairs; while Douglas' immediate objective is getting himself elected Senator. Both are painfully aware that a Democratic victory cannot take place in Illinois unless Chicago voters pick up the slack of the traditionally Republican downstate counties; so that from their point of view, much as they might otherwise applaud his efforts, Merriam's hassle with the city organization is wildly rocking the boat. Both Stevenson and Douglas are said to have felt that young Merriam, in any event, was setting himself too fast a pace, and to have cautioned him to take it easy. If so, the warnings apparently haven't sunk in.

Chicago citizens will vote in the primary for city officials next February 22 and the

election will take place on April 5, 1955. At this writing, Mayor Kennelly has not yet announced his candidacy. Neither has Merriam. But there are indications both will run. One member of the Economy Bloc, Alderman John Hoellen, has suggested publicly that Merriam be drafted as Republican candidate for mayor (this took place even before Merriam had announced his parting from the Democrats).

Commenting on this suggestion several months later, an official of the Democratic organization said, "The Republicans don't want Merriam as a candidate and he's just now finding it out. That leaves him a pretty disillusioned boy who would like to mend his fences with the Democrats." The same spokesman—a highly practical politician—admitted that Merriam's defection is hurting the Democrats by holding them up unjustly as a party of corruption in an election year; but the only organization Merriam now has behind him is the Independent Voters of Illinois whose support, the party official claims, is only lukewarm.

Watching and Waiting

ONLY a crushing defeat for the Democrats in November would compel them to re-embrace Merriam, if indeed they ever would or if he would accept them. The only possible conclusion is that he must run either as a Republican or an independent. And Merriam—whose father once tried it—should have few illusions about the chances of an Independent to win the office of mayor. Both the Republicans and the Democrats would have to put up woefully weak candidates to make this possible.

Meanwhile he watches, waits—and makes headlines. And he says things like this:

I believe there is no Democratic way or Republican way of enforcing ordinances, collecting garbage, or building filtration plants. When elements of one party have banded together with elements of the opposite party solely to turn our city government into a money-making minority monopoly, I can only draw one conclusion: it is time for those who love Chicago to band together to rebuild it, to remake it into the great and beautiful city it can be.

Political demagoguery? Stock phrases uttered by a slick politician out to better himself? Some people think so and have so stated in no uncertain terms. One of his most volatile and persistent critics, State's Attorney John Gutknecht, has accused him time and again of by-passing constituted authority.

When Merriam refused to name Policeman X, he was hailed into Criminal Court in Chicago and threatened with jail unless he gave the name to the Grand Jury. Chief Justice Charles S. Dougherty said to Merriam: "Grand Juries have a lot more to do than chase rainbows. We have enough headline hunters in Washington." One of his fellow aldermen, speaking against the appointment of Merriam as head of the Big Nine, said: "I don't like to see the Committee used as a stage for people running for public office."

The main opposition to Merriam comes from two areas: grafters and regular party men who resent and mistrust Merriam for what they see in him of the political demagogue or the starry-eyed idealist. Yet all the criticisms of Merriam fall within three categories: he is politically ambitious, he is a headline hunter, and he's just too darned good to be true.

MERRIAM makes no bones about the first criticism. He points out that he prepared himself for a career in public administration and finds nothing reprehensible in wanting to rise as far and as fast as possible in his chosen profession. About the second, he says the nature of the work that needs to be done in Chicago is of the stuff which makes headlines. The third requires no comment; only time can prove or disprove it.

If Merriam means what he says, then he is an important figure in American politics, not just to the people of Chicago but to every disgusted, discouraged, and disillusioned city-dweller from Saugatuck to San Francisco. Because he represents most of the things that have long been missing from lower-echelon politics, Merriam holds out hope that politics may some day become a profession, in the hands of people experienced in the administration of public affairs.

For that reason, if no other, Bob Merriam and Chicago are worth watching in 1955.

The Mask

A Story by Storm Jameson

Drawings by Adolph Hallman

THE sun had less warmth than it should have had in mid-February in Nice: it was dulled by a thin cloud which spread across the sky like a cold breath, darkening the sea, tarnishing the black evergreens and livid rocks of the hills. Hurrying across the wide square on his way home to lunch, Biancherie thought: How disappointed he will be if tomorrow it rains. The whole face of the square was masked by the enormous figures, flat, highly-colored, of a child's picture book, fixed there in readiness for the first procession of the Carnival. This year, for the first time, his son Michel had been expecting it. Last year and the year before he had accepted it when it came along, as a day no odder than other days. But between four years and five is an immense gap: suddenly, from being a baby, Michel had become a little boy who knew what Carnival meant.

Biancherie's apartment was the top floor of a strong shabby house near the port: to reach it he had to climb eight flights of dark stone stairs. Once there, he had all the light and sun there was—and, from the narrow balcony outside the sitting room, a view over

roofs to the harbor and the sea. As he opened the door, Michel rushed out of the kitchen and hurled himself at his father's legs. He was wearing long tight black and white checked trousers, a short velvet jacket, buckled slippers; and a small hat with a long scarlet quill.

Biancherie picked him up, rubbed his cheek against the child's hot soft round face, and asked,

"What's this?"

"For tomorrow," the child cried. "And we've bought my mask."

"Show me," said Biancherie.

He set the child down and watched him run along the narrow passage to his bedroom, then went into the kitchen. It was warm with the smells of cooking, fennel, oil, nutmeg. His wife, setting bowls and glasses on the table, looked at him with a smile.

"He would try the things on," she said.

Standing near her, he laid a finger on her hair, black and gleaming, very carefully arranged, and smelling of the scented oil she used; her body

had its own scent, a good vegetable smell, strong and pleasant. At thirty-one Lucile Biancherie was almost as slender as when he married her; she was twenty-five then,



three years older than he was: his mother, who opposed the marriage, had said: "In five years she'll be as round and broad as a casserole." It was a false prophecy. Except that her arms had become fuller, she had not changed; her skin was still so smooth and supple that it was more like a finely spun tissue than human skin; her eyes, dark, immense, under black arched eyebrows, were clear and calm, their thick lids uncreased. She had given Michel everything of herself except these eyes. The child had his father's eyes, smaller, paler, with all Biancherie's look of patience and goodness: for the rest he was his mother, with her smoothly rounded knees and wide shoulders, fine straight nose, and in his armpits and all the curves and hollows of his small body the same strong clean scent, of ripe figs, musk, olives, new bread. He had, too, his mother's passionate temper, changing in an instant from grief to happiness, from blissful tenderness to a moment of violent rage, only a moment; like his mother again, he had a warmly loving heart.

NOT once in six years had Biancherie regretted marrying a young woman without a penny to her name or a decent dress to her back. He seated himself at the table. "What is Michel supposed to be?" he asked.

"Why, a little English boy, of course," cried his wife. "Didn't you look at him?"

"Yes, of course. I wasn't thinking. And his mask?"

"I haven't seen it yet. He went out this morning, with old Madame Titine, and they bought it. A lion or a clown, or some sort of grotesque."

Michel ran into the room, wearing the mask. It was neither grotesque nor animal; it was simply the face of a silly vapid young man, tiny black mustache, weak chin, turned-up nose. Biancherie disliked it at once, but until his wife burst out laughing he did not realize why.

"But it's you, Jeannot," she stammered, "it's exactly you . . . Did you know it was like Daddy?" she asked the little boy.

"That's why I chose it," said Michel, pleased.

Pulling the mask off, he kissed it tenderly, then climbed on to his father's knee, and kissed him with the same warm love. Bian-

cherie barely responded. He was shocked, a little dazed, hurt. Did they really, Lucile and his son, see in him this fatuous booby? Abruptly, his wife realized that he was hurt. She came round the table to him and pressed his head against her body, roughening his hair.

"Don't spoil Michel's pleasure in his mask," she said softly; "he chose it because he loves you and thinks you're the best-looking man in the world. As I do."

"But if that's what I'm like . . ." he began.

"You're not. It's a child's drawing of you, it's not you at all. Not really."

She caressed his face, then bent and kissed him. Reassured, he ate his lunch with appetite, but when, before going out, he went into their bedroom, he stood for a full minute in front of the looking glass, scrutinizing his face . . . Do I look like it? . . . True, his chin was nothing much of a chin, and the black circumflex of mustache drawn halfway between his nose and his small mouth was identical with that on the mask, but there, surely, the likeness ceased? For less than a second his head swam, and his eyes looked back at him from the glass through slits, like Michel's eyes through the slits in the mask. He pulled himself together and saw the face he was familiar with, not handsome, certainly, but not vacant and conceited, an amiable gentle candid face, his face. As he turned from the glass, Lucile came into the room: picking up scarf and overcoat, he kissed her and went off.

THE sky was less veiled, as if the sun were getting the better of the cloud, and as he hurried through the narrow streets he felt happy and exhilarated. When he reached the pharmacy, his assistant, old Angeli, had unlocked the door and was waiting for him inside, his face dark with news.

"You're wanted at your mother's. She's dying. They've just telephoned from the Red Cross post. You're to go up there at once."

The news was expected, yet it startled him, as if something in his body were being squeezed and twisted. He decided, although he had more than twenty-five miles to go, to take a taxi. He hurried back home, told Lucile, who cried warmly, "Oh, poor old thing!", promised to get a message to her in the morning, and went off.

A feeling of suspense which was neither anxiety nor grief but confused both, kept him leaning forward tensely in the cab, his mind strained toward the village he would reach, with luck, in two hours. It was a terrific climb, and at the garage near the harbor they had given him an old wheezing car; he felt vexed that he had not taken one of the splendid cars waiting to be hired by tourists. But long before they left the outskirts of Nice and began to climb into the hills, he had ceased to strain forward, and was in, yes, in the village. He had only to think of it, it had only to come uninvited into his head, for Nice—even old Nice where he lived, its houses vibrating like wasps' nests, its odorous noisy streets—to become shadowy and colorless: at once, without willing it, he was crossing the small dusty square in scorching sun, his feet burned through the soles of his sandals by the iron-hard earth, his eyelids fluttering in the light; or walking, stumbling over loose stones, down the street to his mother's house: not a single street in this village of two hundred souls had been made; they were all tracks, of pale dust in summer, of mud in winter before the snow came and after it melted. Even sometimes on first waking, before he stretched out a hand and touched Lucile lying warm and insensible beside him, he was in that other room, between bare walls he could touch on both sides without moving from his slip of a bed, staring at the barred window high in the wall.

THE house had two rooms, only two, his and the one where his mother slept, and cooked, behind a screen. Here they sat in the evenings, he bent over his lessons under the petrol lamp, she upright, hands folded, eyes fixed, not in a glance, however distant, but in a total absence, as if she had separated herself, once and for all, from every object and creature round her.

Next door to this almost hovel was the house, the large dignified house where he had been born and had lived until an evening in his fifth year. That evening he came home from spending the day lower down the steep street with Madame Gabano, his foster mother, to find the great front door locked and sealed. His mother was waiting for him in the doorway of their new home.

As a child does, he had accepted the change

without misgiving. His father was not there. Once after this he asked for him, and she said violently,

"He has gone."

He never asked again. Years later he learned what had happened. His father had been away for days, one of his habitual absences. That morning, after his mother had dispatched him to Madame Gabano, she sent to Vence for the notary and ordered him to fix seals on the house—her own—and to inform her husband that this time it would be no use his returning. It was finished. Let him stay with *his other wife* . . . Her husband made no attempt to come back to her; his son did not even know whether he were alive still. The great house remained shut up, all its furniture in place. She never set foot in it again.

THE boy was not unhappy living, with his nearly silent mother, in their two rooms. He was by nature gay and confident, and he had always (like his father) another home, his foster mother's, Madame Gabano's warm dark kitchen below the little café with its overpowering smell of red coarse wine and garlic: the window, on the precipice side of the house, overlooked a descending pattern of hills folding one into another, down, down, to the plain and the thin distant arc of sea. Here he had a family, a real family, with outbursts of laughter, scolding, tears; in one corner Pierre Gabano's bed, Pierre his foster brother—his friend, Pierre.

Four years older than Jeannot, Pierre, at nine, was not a child: broad-shouldered, with a high color in his dark cheeks, large strong hands, feet of which every toe moved as easily as a finger, and magnificent eyes, so thickly fringed by long black eyelashes that they appeared to take up even more space than they did in his wide face. He was short in body, but very strong, very gentle. Jean Biancherie followed at his heels like a young dog, waiting for the caress he was certain before long to get. Pierre at this time was his mother, it was with Pierre that he had all his experience of the tenderness of a mother.

For three or four years after the day his mother sealed the house, Pierre was the whole of his family. Then, with the reckless generosity for which she was known, Madame Gabano adopted the daughter of neighbors



who had died suddenly. Lucile Grassi was twelve. He remembered her coming into the kitchen when he was there, in her black ugly dress, her eyes reddened, her lips thick with crying. Pierre was not at home. Madame Gabano had to go upstairs to the café, and he was left alone with her. She sat down on the corner of Pierre's bed and took no notice of his shy words.

After a time, because he did not know what else to do, he began to reel about the room like a clown, hoping to make her laugh. She did laugh. She laughed, then cried a little, and a minute later fell suddenly asleep, falling back on the bed as if something in her had given way. He was afraid to budge. He stood and stared. She lay with one arm over the side of the bed. He saw the fingers of this hand, small, plump, slowly uncurl until it lay on the floor like the soft paw of a little animal. Holding his breath, he went down on one knee and kissed it, timidly, gently.

I must, he reflected, have begun to love her in that moment, without knowing it. She returned his love. For fier years she was childish, and they played together as if they were of an age, rolling about the floor, like puppies, under Pierre's amused eyes. He was only a year older than Lucile, but at this time, at thirteen, he was already almost a young man. Sometimes, between the warmth of the kitchen and their exertions, the two young ones rolled into each other and fell asleep. Pierre picked them up then and dropped them on his bed.

THE car was grinding up the last mile of road. Seen from below, the village was a jagged line of walls the yellow color of ivory, poised on the knife-point of the hill. Below them the hill dropped sheerly away a hundred feet into a gentler slope scarred by derelict terraces, from the time when eight hundred people lived here and grew olives. Now the only olive trees were his mother's.

The car stopped in the square; the driver refused to attempt the street leading out of it.

Empty in winter sunlight, the square received him and pushed him gently down the

stony dust of the street, between houses, half of them abandoned, the rest all eyes behind the low windows.

Is she still alive?

He pushed open the door. Madame Gabano stood up at the side of the bed, balancing from side to side her sparrow's head, thrusting her wrinkled lips forward in a smile.

"You're here, Jeannot. Good."

He bent over his mother lying in the center of the bed. "Is she asleep?"

"No, poor lady—unconscious." She sighed. "Now you've come I can go home and see to things a little. I'll come back."

"What is there to do for her?" he asked, uneasy.

"Nothing, my poor Jeannot. There's nothing."

Alone, he brought his face close to the face lying there inert, a fragment of old brown wood, the eyelids a darker brown than the rest, and sunken, as if there were nothing under them, as if what had been an absence of looking had become an absence at last of her eyes themselves.

"I'm here," he said. "This is Jean, your son Jean."

There was no recognition in the dark face: below the forehead, scored across by irregular black lines, her beaked nose stood out like a little scimitar. Biancherie rubbed his own. You could at least have given me that, he reflected.

It was growing dark when Madame Gabano came back. She had left a meal ready for him

in her kitchen. He went off, ate, drank part of the bottle of wine, and returned.

"How long will this go on?" he asked.

"A day. Two days. Or a few hours. Go to bed and sleep. I'll sit up."

"No, Mamma," he told her. "Leave her to me."

She fussed round him for a time, and at last, quite glad to go, went.

IT WAS an interminable night. He thought of Lucile asleep now in the wide bed in their room, of his mother's refusal to see her or acknowledge her as a daughter-in-law, of her contempt for the young woman as a nothing, the daughter of two nothings. *Double zero*, she called her.

What else but this contempt had driven Lucile to refuse, during more than two long years, to marry him? The first time he asked her, when he was nineteen and she twenty-two, she had refused gently; after that, her rejections became sharper and irritable. She suffered, he thought, from that cruel *double zero*. When she gave in, it came suddenly, brusquely, very much as she had dropped asleep that first day, a spring broken in her. He was already in Nice, living there during the week and coming home at the weekend. One Sunday he had been helping to pick the olives; toward four o'clock, exhausted, he gave it up and came home. He left Pierre there, still hard at work. Almost at the village, he saw a young woman still bending over the stone trough at the end of the street, wringing the sheets she had been washing. It was Lucile. He walked with her to Madame Gabano's, carrying the damp bundle. She forced herself to be gay, to chatter to him, but she was tired. In the kitchen she held out her hands, purple with cold, finger-ends wrinkled. Half smiling, half bitter, she said, "They'll soon be like everyone else's—pads, not hands."

He caught hold of them.

"When you marry me, you'll be living in Nice, with no need to ruin your hands to wash sheets."

She laughed at him, mocking and gentle.

"What could I do in Nice? They would make fun of me."

"No one would laugh at you, at my wife. Everyone without exception would look at you with respect. You're so calm, so beautiful,

you would be like a princess living there."

She turned away from him.

"I'm too old for you. I'm three years older than you, my dear Jeannot."

His heart beating violently, he made an unsteady move toward her. She was going to give in to him. He knew.

"Nonsense," he said, with difficulty. "You are only a child—my child. I was born older than you, much older."

She let him take her in his arms. There were tears on her eyelids, but she was smiling. He kissed the side of her neck: though she did not return his kisses, she tightened her hold of him and he felt her tremble.

Neither of them heard Pierre. The first sound they heard was his indrawn breath. Lucile freed herself and wheeled round.

"Jeannot and I are going to be married."

"She has agreed," Biancherie cried. "At last."

He waited for Pierre to smile, to throw both arms round him and kiss him, and kiss Lucile. Pierre did not move.

"Is it true?" he asked Lucile.

"Yes, of course."

"Why?"

"What do you mean, why?" said Biancherie. "We've always loved each other, I'm of age, I have money of my own, why shouldn't we get married?"

"Your mother," said Pierre.

Oh, if that were all. "My mother will agree to what she can't prevent any longer."

"D'you think so? That isn't my idea of Madame Biancherie. She has never in her life agreed to what vexed her. Coming from God or the devil. Still less chance when it only comes from you."

"Why are you talking like this?" Biancherie asked.

"He is surprised," said Lucile quietly. She spoke to Pierre, looking at him. "How can I go on living here—with nothing—with hardly a pair of stockings to my name? And nothing to look forward to except hard work, poverty, wrinkles? Think, Pierre."

"Yes," he answered.

There was a silence. Pierre lifted his head and looked from one to the other. He smiled. Laying an arm round Biancherie, he kissed him on both cheeks.

"You'll be happy. Lucile will be kind to you."

Biancherie laughed. "You haven't asked me to be kind to Lucile."

"No need," said Pierre, "you couldn't help it. You can't help being kind."

"Who could," he smiled, "to Lucile?"

"Who could to Lucile?" echoed Pierre.

It was after their marriage that Pierre himself went off, to become a sailor. His mother, Madame Biancherie, the whole village, were stupefied. The sea, after all! But he enjoyed his new life. The first thing he did at the end of a voyage, before going home to his mother, was to climb the eight flights of stairs to see his foster brother and Lucile, bringing them whatever had caught his eye in Valparaiso or Puerto Buenos, a piece of silk, a fan, a nest of carved boxes. These visits, too short, were gay, gayer than the Carnival.

THE shadows flying up and out of the night light merged into one shadow. Hanging forward in his chair, he fell asleep. He woke with a jerk of his body. His watch had stopped, but he heard passing the house a man going to work, and he knew it must be daylight. Noiselessly he opened the shutter: light came into the room.

Madame Gabano arrived and sent him off to drink the coffee she had left at the side of the stove. Later, about ten, the doctor arrived.

"Another twenty-four hours," he said. "She's strong."

"Poor lady," said Madame Gabano.

"She feels nothing," said the doctor.

"Can you be sure?"

The doctor shrugged his shoulders. He had other patients in the village, and went off. Biancherie hurried out. He telephoned to Angeli at the pharmacy, to tell him what the doctor had said. "Let my wife know—at once—that I shall be staying up here another night." He went back to the house. As he opened the door, his foster mother turned round from the bed slowly, and told him,

"Your mother is dead."

An hour or so later, when the doctor was leaving the house for the second time, Madame Gabano said,

"My poor Jeannot, you must go out for a time, and leave her with me. Put it at two hours. What will you do? Walk? Go home?"

By home, as he knew, she meant her own kitchen. Obeying an impulse, he asked the doctor,

"If you're going back to Nice will you run me down there? I can see my wife for a few minutes and come straight back."

"Certainly."

He wanted the warmth of Lucile's body against his own for a moment, a solace, a remedy against the mortal cold he had felt flowing round him. It had set his teeth chattering. All would be well if, for only a moment, he could rest his cheek below her throat and feel her hand press it there closely. The complete security she gave him with this one gesture was so exquisite that each time it happened he thought the same thing: She is giving me my soul. Nothing else she did for him equaled this gift of security. So gentle, so simple, so beyond any gratitude. Always, he felt always, when he put his arms round her, or when, turning the light off, he came to lie beside her in their bed, the same sensation of warmth and safety he had felt as a child the moment he stepped into his foster mother's kitchen and closed the door on everything that chilled and puzzled him outside.

THE doctor dropped him in the center of Nice. It was two hours before the Carnival would start, but already excited children were running about the square in any sort of cheap pinned-together disguise. He smiled, remembered Michel's mask, and frowned.

He let himself into the apartment without a sound. Michel, he knew, would be sleeping, or at least lying on his bed pretending to sleep. "No sleep, no Carnival," his mother would have warned. There were no sounds of life but, to his surprise, he saw that three people had had lunch in the kitchen. The table was still covered with their plates and glasses. The door of the sitting room was open, and he could see across it to the balcony.

Lucile was out there, with Pierre. They stood, so closely embraced, Lucile's body as if molded into Pierre's, his mouth closed on hers, that the only movement possible was that of Pierre's hands, passing in a series of light touches up her body as far as the shoulders. When they reached her shoulders she pressed her head back, an expression of anguish on her face, her lips parted, showing the line of her teeth, her eyes wide open. This expression more than anything stupefied Biancherie. He had never seen anything like

it on her face. But how could I? he thought dully. She never felt like that for me.

Without another thought, without making a sound, he crept back along the passage to the door, opened it noiselessly, and went away.

FOR a long time he walked about the streets, with a harassed rapid step, as though in search of something. He was not thinking. When, without meaning to, he came back toward the square, it was filled with people. The monstrous grotesques of the Carnival were jiggling round in the sun, under a torrent of music brayed by the loud-speakers.

Suddenly, not very far from him in the crowd, he saw the three of them, Lucile, Pierre, laughing, with Michel straddling his broad shoulders. The child was wearing his mask, and now for the first time Biancherie felt hatred opening in him, like a horrible wound. No doubt Lucile had lied, it was she who had chosen the mask and taught his son to laugh at him. For a searing moment he confounded her and the child in one spasm of hatred. Michel put his hand up, pushed the mask off his face, and instantly became his good little Michel, impulsive, warm-hearted, loving. The hatred devouring Biancherie turned against his wife and Pierre; if it had touched them they would be dead. Afraid of being seen, he turned and elbowed his way through the crowd, and went by back streets to the pharmacy. The idea of killing them persisted in him: his meager body had become a block of anger. A phrase repeated itself in his mind.

"Double zero, double zero."

If he could rub out this double zero, make it the nothing it had always, except in his infatuated head, been, what a relief. What became of him afterward was completely unimportant.

There were three people in the pharmacy. Angeli, after sending him a commiserating inquisitive glance, went on serving them. Biancherie smiled vaguely. Going into the room at the back, he helped himself to enough gardenal to kill four or five people.

Angeli came in. "I wasn't expecting you, I thought—"

"My mother is dead," he interrupted.

He felt his knees giving way. He sat down, broken, in the only chair. He shut his eyes,

until he felt a glass placed against his lips.

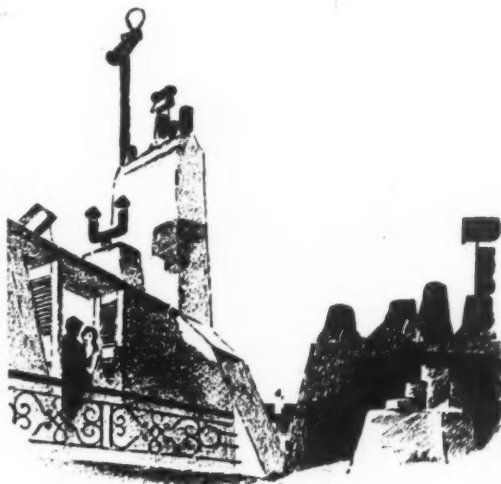
"Drink this up."

He drank it, and felt his senses return. "Thanks. I'm all right."

"It's a shock when they go," said Angeli. "You should go home now and let your wife put you to bed for the day."

"Perhaps."

He left, and went back to the apartment. There, the remains of lunch had been cleared away, except for a nearly full bottle of the rough wine Pierre liked. No doubt they meant to finish it at supper. He did not look inside the bedroom, his and Lucile's. Instead, he busied himself dissolving the gardenal in the wine, then sat down to wait. As they came in at the door he would jump up, cry, "Pierre! What luck! When did you get here?" And run to the cupboard for glasses. Pretending to drink he would watch, watch,



until, not sure what was happening to them, half insensible, their limbs heavy, first one and then the other slid to the floor.

In all this, he had forgotten Michel. When, abruptly, he thought of him, the image that jumped into his mind was of Michel as a six-months-old baby. He had been as old as that before Pierre—away on a long voyage, lasting a year and a half—saw him. How gently he had lifted him out of his cradle! And held him on one arm, Michel's head fitting neatly into the hollow of his shoulder.

"He's exactly his mother," he said.

"Yes, isn't he!"

At this instant Michel opened his eyes and

looked directly at the dark rosy face above his. Smiling, Pierre traced with his finger a line round these widely-open eyes.

"But he has your eyes, Jeannot, your good kind eyes. Let's hope he has your kind heart as well."

"If he has as much goodness as Lucile, that's all I want," he answered.

Astonishing both men, Lucile burst into a violent fit of tears. "No, no," she stammered, "no, I'm not good. It is you, Jeannot, you."

At the time he had put it down to the nervous overexcitement of a young woman with her first baby. She had recovered quickly, and the evening, Michel safely asleep, had been one of delicious happiness and gaiety, with bursts of laughter when Pierre brought out the wildly unsuitable presents he had thought of for the child.

When, he wondered, did it begin?

AS IF it had been waiting all these years for him, a scene came back from the past. From his twelfth year. He was in the kitchen with Lucile and his foster brother: it was late evening, nearly ten o'clock, and still very warm. It had been a hot heavy day. Lucile, restless and languid, moved about the room, and Pierre—Pierre the young man of sixteen, with the line of black feathery hairs along his upper lip—watched her.

"Jeannot, your mother will be angry if you don't go home," he said.

He knew it, but did not move, uneasy, feeling himself unwanted, at a loss. Suddenly Pierre stood up and walked across the room to where Lucile was leaning against the window.

Stooping, he rubbed his dark face against hers, and passed his mouth over her forehead, her eyes, hair. These caresses were not different from others the boy had seen him give her, yet there was a difference. Bending lower, Pierre made the infantile gesture of pressing his nose against the breasts outlined under her cotton dress. Turning, she looked at the boy.

"Go home to bed."

The roughness, the impatience, of her voice startled him out of his inertia. He went.

They had begun to make love, he thought. Or that, perhaps, was the evening they began. Closing his eyes, he let rise behind them images thrown up by his jealousy and rage:

Pierre taking the girl's head between his hands, drawing it toward him, his mouth seeking her hair or her eyes, Pierre lying back, for a moment passive, under the pressure of her young mouth.

But, suddenly, scattering these images, flinging them aside, there rose in him a jet of pure grief. It was without force or heat, yet tore him apart. She has always been so kind, he thought. And Pierre is so kind.

A ridiculous memory seized him: the day when, a very little boy, he forgot himself as they say, and Pierre whipped off his knickers, washed him, washed them, dried them on the stove, and had them back on him before Madame Gabano came downstairs from the café.

The memory filled him with love. His heart turned over in him. Never, he had never felt for his foster brother such a swelling wave of love and tenderness. It swept him to a point where he felt, about both of them, his wife and Pierre, that they were younger and weaker than he was. It was almost a maternal feeling, astonishing and frightening.

How I spoiled things for them, he thought. Not only that night. How, with my money, my assured future, I turned Lucile away from her contentment as the wife of a man who could give her none of the things I have given her, with whom she would have been poor, hard-worked, prematurely old, but—in a word—filled.

He felt a sharp pity for her, pure love, pure tenderness.

The sooner I take myself out of their way the better, he thought calmly. He stood up. Shaking the bottle of wine as if it were medicine, he measured out half of it into a tumbler, poured the rest down the sink, and carried the tumbler into the bedroom.

He drank all the bitter wine, and lay down.

THE door was flung open by Michel. He danced into the room, wearing his silly little mask. Capering round the bed, he cried,

"Look at me, I'm you now. I'm me and you. Do look."

Since there was no answer from the bed, he pouted and ran back into the kitchen shouting to his mother and Tonton Pierre that his father had come back and was asleep.

(American management has come a long way since the days of "the public be damned" attitude of tycoon and railroad baron. . . . But what is the prime duty of the captain of industry today—now that old-age benefits, the wives of employees, and the community chest have come under his wing?)

The Responsibilities of Management

Peter F. Drucker

You might wonder, if you were a conscientious newspaper reader, when the managers of American business had any time for business. Last spring I watched the papers for a single month with a specific question in mind—what does management think it ought to do about its public responsibilities? In a few weeks I discovered that management was ready to take upon itself as many good works as a Boy Scout troop. Here, for example, are some of the responsibilities that well-known businessmen asserted publicly were the business of business: the Community Chest drive, the employment of the physically handicapped, research in the social sciences, and support of symphony orchestras. That is only a start. It is business's business, they say, to back religious tolerance, to support the United Nations, and to foster the economic education of the American people. It should also stand behind a liberal foreign-trade policy, take care of intellectual refugees from China, and ensure the freedom of the press in America. It should concern itself with conservation of forests.

Mr. Sloan of General Motors and Mr. Abrams of Standard Oil (New Jersey), to be more specific, have formed an organization to discharge management's responsibilities for the maintenance of the private colleges. Mr. Paepcke of the Container Corporation of America not only asserts, but applies, the theory that management has a responsibility for the arts.

In some cases, of course, when businessmen aver that they have a "public responsibility" it is only a fashionable way of saying: "Here is a worthy cause; let's give money to it." On the other hand there is no doubt that because of its power and prominence in industrial society management must accept heavy public responsibilities that go far beyond charity.

No one, I think, would question the fact that this attitude on the part of business managers is an improvement over the "public be damned" point of view that marred the period of cantankerous free enterprise and exuberant industrial growth. It is a corollary of what is often called the "professionalization" of management—by which is meant the trend among managers to think of themselves almost as public servants, not as men driven by a ruthless craving for profits. Yet there is another sense in which their new attitude is not wholly an improvement. Managers, it seems to me, have gone so far afield in searching for new social responsibilities that they have lost sight of those that lie under their very noses.

Let us look at management's real public responsibilities. They are a long way from the Community Chest and the care of intellectual refugees from China. They are not just a cultural frosting on the cake that management both wants to have and to eat. They are, I am convinced, part and parcel of their business responsibilities. They are the real business of business.

I think that we can agree that the first responsibility of management is always to the business enterprise and that, since it is the primary job of any business enterprise to make a profit, management must see to it that it does. This profit must be the minimum that the business needs to do its job, and the job is more than merely to see that the shareholders get a return on their investment. No business operates in a purely financial climate. It operates in a social climate as well, a climate peopled not only by stockholders but by employees and by consumers and by the members of the community, small and large, in which it has its being. Whether it likes it or not, management has a responsibility to all of these people and has to take them all into account when it calculates what its minimum profit must be.

Business must not only make a profit for its owners but it must also cover the risks of the future. It must meet its share of community responsibilities which it does partly by paying the taxes that the community demands, and it must support a steady improvement in the goods it produces or in the services it supplies.

MANAGEMENTS in America are nothing if not "profit-conscious." Usually they talk about their responsibilities to the shareholder for profits; and while this is certainly one of their responsibilities, the shareholder, at least in a publicly owned company, can always sell his shares and get out. But what about the rest of us? If an enterprise fails, it is not just the stockholders who take a loss; we all lose. Jobs are gone and wealth is wasted. It is the community that bears the brunt, and we are all part of the community. It is management's job to see to it that it makes enough profit both for the enterprise and for society—enough for the people who own the business and enough for those who live by it.

The fact is that we all live by it, however indirectly it may seem to touch us, and the policy decisions that are made by management affect all of us. But let it be said that this is a two-way street. If it is true that the decisions of management affect our welfare, it is just as true that our attitudes toward business affect its welfare. Management must conduct their affairs in such a way that they

make the minimum profit which they need to discharge their responsibilities and at the same time keep all of us even if we are not owners rooting for the business enterprise.

But let us take some examples of specific public responsibilities that face management and see how it is discharging them. Some relate directly to the people who work for the enterprise, some to the larger public. Some are near at hand; some lie further in the future. But all of them are closely tied to the main business of business, and none of them are the sort of thing that I found to be worrying management when I made my informal survey of the newspapers last spring.

What Employees Demand

IT SHOULD have been clear to any management ten years ago that the changing age structure of the American population, coupled with the steady drop in the purchasing power of the dollar, would produce an irresistible demand on business to do something for old employees. Some managements—those of General Electric; Sears, Roebuck; or the Bell Telephone System, for instance—saw this need forty or fifty years ago and did something about it. But few others anticipated the inevitable. As a result managements have been forced to accept demands for employee pensions which impose the greatest rather than the least burden on the enterprise. Furthermore they do not meet the real problem of what to do with the older worker who is both willing and able to continue to do some useful work.

American managements are about, I am afraid, to make exactly the same kind of mistake in handling the demand for stabilized employment and income for workers. Social pressure is behind this demand and the pressure is becoming all but irresistible. Historically the line between "salary" and "wage" has been the line between "middle class" and "working class." Though during most of our history, for example, the bricklayer has been paid at a higher rate than the teacher or the minister, the teacher's income—low as it has been—has traditionally been an "annual salary," the bricklayer's an "hourly wage." But the worker in this country has by and large become "middle class" in his way of life, his standard of living, and his basic atti-

tudes, and his demand for stabilized employment and income is something much more powerful than a demand for economic gain or economic security. It is a demand for the social symbol that expresses the worker's new social and economic status. Status has tremendous emotional appeal to everyone but especially to a generation which still suffers from the "depression psychosis" it acquired in the thirties.

The Desire for Absolutes

ABSOLUTE employment-security—the "guaranteed annual wage" of union rhetoric—cannot satisfy this demand. Absolute security is as empty a promise as one of immortality would be. Such a promise would not only end in bitter disillusionment; it would make a depression almost inevitable and extremely severe. And (as a similar guarantee in Italy has done) it would keep employers from hiring new workers and would thus actually create unemployment.

But it is possible to find the employment expectation in most businesses, and it is almost always much higher than either management or workers realize. It is nearly always possible to improve this expectation significantly by better management methods that stabilize work; and wherever that has been done the result has been a real improvement in business performance. Finally it is possible to insure an expectation of this sort in a way that makes it dependable for the worker and without risk to the business. To find and develop this workable, if not profitable, way to satisfy the worker's demand for employment security is a clear duty a management owes to the enterprise that pays its salaries. To refuse to recognize it will in the long run saddle enterprise and economy with the phony "immortality" of an absolute employment guarantee.

A similar responsibility of management may well exist today with respect to the demand for equality in employment regardless of race, creed, and color—and a management that is alive to its responsibilities to the enterprise, might realize that this demand may outside the Deep South include within a few years a demand for racial equality in respect to promotional opportunities.

So far I have mentioned only responsi-

bilities that arise out of already existing public pressures. But management also owes it to the enterprise to manage in such a way that it does not create public demands and public policies which will threaten in the future the enterprise, its freedom, and its economic success.

In recent years, for instance, many companies have dispersed their plants geographically. In doing so some of them have simply built, in a new location, a replica of the original plant that turns out the same product for the same market. In many cases both the old and the new plants are the main source of employment in their respective communities. There is a rubber company with old plants in Akron and a new plant in a small Southern town; a ball-bearing company with an old plant in a small New England town and a new plant in a small town in Ohio; a shirt-maker with old plants in upstate New York and a new plant in rural Tennessee, and many others.

IN A depression this can only lead to serious public reaction. It may even lead to a demand for governmental regulation and planning of plant location. For in a depression management will have to decide which of these plants to close down and which to keep open—the new plants, which represent a high capital investment, have by and large a high break-even point, and thus require capacity operations in order to be profitable; or the old plants, around which a whole community may have grown up. But will any community, no matter how eager it was to obtain the new industry, take quietly a management decision to deprive it of its main source of income so as to keep up employment in some other community?

The bitterness and tenacity of the recent strike of the Hatters' Union in Danbury, Connecticut, caused by the mere suspicion that management might intend to move operations from an old-established local plant to new plants in the South and Midwest, shows what impact management decisions of this sort have even during a boom. If the market and the forces of the business cycle bring about local unemployment, that's one thing. But if management does so, that's quite another thing. It may therefore be a vital management responsibility to organize new plants

so that they have their own markets and their own products. Otherwise expansion will lead to a clash between management and the community, between the requirements of the business and the requirements of public policy. And in such a clash business is bound to lose.

Another current practice which may tend to breed hostile public opinion and public policies is the exclusive hiring of college graduates for management positions. It narrows the promotional opportunities for foremen and thus cuts off the most important rungs on the traditional American ladder of opportunities; the same is true of the policy of not hiring older workers. To discharge its responsibility to the enterprise management should give close attention to the impact of these practices upon the public welfare and upon public opinion.

In brief, management should always, in every one of its policies and decisions, ask the question: what would the public reaction be if everyone in industry did that? What would the public impact be if this behavior were general business behavior? And this is not just a question the large corporations have to ask. Small businesses and their managements have fully as much of an impact.

Dangerous Ground

SO FAR we have been talking about responsibilities that lie right under the nose of management, and all of them are responsibilities that, I believe, they must assume. But there is another side to the coin. There are responsibilities that management should avoid. There are danger areas into which management should not venture, for it has a responsibility not to undermine our social beliefs and not to usurp authority that extends beyond its rightful area of operation. It must not take over the management of the lives as well as the jobs of its employees.

"It's always a toss-up whether the men will stop work on an economic issue," an experienced union leader once said, "but you can always pull them out on a good grievance." The unions, it is true, have effectively limited management control of the worker—sometimes too effectively. But the same cannot be said of the relations of management with its own kind. Increasingly, businesses claim the

absolute allegiance of their management people and absolute control over them. The vice president in charge of personnel in one of our largest companies, for example, advocates in all seriousness that young executives present their fiancées to the company for inspection and approval before being allowed to marry them.

"A man's wife is a very important factor in his success," he explains. "And we have much too large a stake in our executives to allow them to ruin themselves."

And while this man's associates laugh at him for being "impractical," none of them to my knowledge have said bluntly that the suggestion is an outrage.

IN A free society the citizen is a loyal member of many institutions; and none can claim him entirely or alone. *In this pluralism lies the strength and the freedom of a free society.* If the enterprise ever forgets this, society will retaliate by making its own supreme institution, the State, omnipotent and total. Today's tendency of so many (especially of our larger) enterprises to assume paternal authority over its management people and to demand of them a special allegiance to the enterprise is socially irresponsible, indefensible alike on grounds of public policy and the enterprise's self-interest. The company is not and must never claim to be home, family, religion, life, or fate for the individual in management. It must not interfere in his private life or his citizenship. The employee is tied to the company through a voluntary and cancelable employment contract, not through some mystical and indissoluble bond. Whatever an employment contract implies the enterprise can demand of him—but not one iota more.

It is even highly doubtful whether managements are entitled to use the findings of the so-called "social sciences" to attempt to "motivate" or to "lead" their employees, or to "change their attitudes." For all these are polite terms for "control through manipulation."

It is one of the responsibilities of management to know where its responsibilities stop, for it is when management oversteps the limits of its legitimate sphere of action that it runs head on into adverse public opinion. It behooves management to realize that in every

business policy and every business action it ought to consider the impact of its decisions on society. Does its action promote the public good? Is it likely to advance the basic beliefs of our society? Will it contribute to stability, strength, and harmony? If the answers are negative, then the policies will ultimately be harmful to business.

BUT let us go back to where we started. What about management's responsibilities for the colleges, for foreign policy, and for the arts? Management is, after all, one of the leading groups in our society, and is it not the responsibility of leading groups to be concerned with such matters?

The answer is yes. All leading groups need to be concerned. But to assume responsibility is quite another matter, for responsibility implies authority and it is none of management's legitimate business to have authority over such matters as education and the arts. Indeed it is unthinkable. But that is not to say that there are not public responsibilities over which management may very well assume responsibility which carries with it authority. There are public responsibilities which are legitimately the business of business, and where it can function effectively and in the public welfare as a leading group.

Such an area, and a major one, is fiscal policy. Look, and let management look, at our tax structure. It was built when the income tax was 4 per cent (and that applied only to millionaires). It has grown like Topsy, so that what we have today is an illogical, unmanageable, even immoral tax structure that encourages and rewards irresponsible actions and decisions on the part of both business and private individuals. Here is an area where management can make a major contribution and where, therefore, it has a major responsibility.

It is not enough for management to scream that taxes are too high. What we need is a policy that reconciles the necessity of continuing high government expenditure with the requirements of society and economy. As long as management confines itself to shouting "down with taxes" it will not have discharged its responsibility for fiscal policy. In fact it will only have made itself look irresponsible in the eyes of the public.

Wherever management's competence gives

it authority, it also has a responsibility, and this responsibility has to be discharged in the public interest. It is not good enough for management to start out with the premise, "what is good for the business is good for the country," even though, for the very large company (such as General Motors) which is almost a cross section of the American economy, there is a great deal of concealed truth in this understandably unpopular assertion. For while management's competence is the basis of its authority, the only basis on which this authority can be used, is the public interest. What is good for the business is irrelevant.

The reason why Paul Hoffman's Committee for Economic Development was such a resounding success and was so generally applauded by the public was not that its policies and recommendations were more "liberal" than those of the National Association of Manufacturers: actually the NAM is a great deal more "liberal" in many areas. What made CED acceptable was precisely that it focused on the public interest and tried to brush aside whatever private interests its management members might have had. The NAM on the other hand always seems to act as though what is good for its membership must also be good for the country. It is for this reason that it is viewed with general suspicion, if not with distrust.

Sears, Roebuck and IBM

IT MAY sometimes seem (indeed, it often does) that the public welfare and the welfare of business are at loggerheads. But we cannot avoid the conclusion that management as one of the leading groups in our society has the responsibility for trying to reconcile whatever is genuinely in the public interest to what is genuinely in the interest of business. There are many examples of ingenious managements that have turned the public interest into self-interest and have served themselves at the same time that they have helped to save the community from near disaster.

In the worst days of the depression General Wood of Sears, Roebuck ordered his managers to pay a minimum wage averaging \$15 a week—about twice the weekly wage then actually paid to salesgirls, especially in small towns, and higher even than the minimum-

wage law enacted over violent business opposition a few years later. Wages are a major expense in any retail business, and store managers complained that the higher wage costs would drive them out of business. General Wood remained firm. He argued: there is an absolute minimum income on which an employee can live these days. Any wage below that is therefore contrary to the public interest. It's our job as managers to make the higher wages an opportunity to bring about better performance and lower costs—through better selection and training of employees, through lower employee turnover, through higher sales per employee. And Sears succeeded in absorbing a doubling of individual wage rates without any reduction in profit margin. The decision taken twenty years ago certainly explains in large part the significant differences in performance and attitudes between Sears employees and those of most of the other large retail companies.

ALSO during the depression the management of International Business Machines decided to maintain employment. IBM is a capital-goods producer—traditionally a “boom-and-bust” business. All its competitors sharply cut back production and reduced their employment. IBM, however, decided that the maintenance of employment was in the social interest and therefore a responsibility of the company's management. This meant that management had to find new markets—both at home and abroad—and had to develop new products. It meant also that the company had to build up sizable inventories, especially of parts, for which there was no foreseeable demand. Again management's attitude was: it's our job to make an opportunity out of a public responsibility. The result: it was the drive to find new products and new markets in the thirties that made IBM the leader in the industry today.

If you were to say that I have given only examples of success and have left it for the bankruptcy courts to bury the examples of failure, you would, of course, be right. But that does not alter my contention that it is *possible* for management to assume public responsibilities and turn them to the profit of enterprise. When they do this they are serving the community and themselves. They are performing the real business of business,

and they are assuming the responsibilities which they, and only they, have the competence to discharge.

Two hundred and fifty years ago an English pamphleteer, Mandeville, summed up the spirit of the new commercial age in a famous epigram: “Private vices have become public benefits.” He may have been right; economists since Adam Smith have been arguing the point without reaching agreement. But whether he was right or wrong is irrelevant; no society can be built on such a belief and last. For in a good, a moral, a lasting society the public good must always rest on private virtue.

The fact that “capitalism,” as the nineteenth century understood the term (and as Europe still largely understands it), was based on Mandeville's principle may explain its material success. It certainly explains the revulsion against “capitalism” and “capitalists” that has swept the Western world during the last hundred years. “Capitalism” has been attacked not because it is an inefficient or a misgoverned society but because it is a cynical society. And indeed a society based on the assertion that private vices become public benefits cannot endure, no matter how provable its logic, no matter how great its benefits.

THERE is an echo of Mandeville's principle in the way so many members of management have gone far afield to find public responsibilities to assume. It is as though they didn't believe that business could serve the public interest by sticking to business but had to find good works to salve their conscience. But the fact is, and it is not only an encouraging but a revolutionary fact, that more and more business enterprises are being managed so as to make the public good the private good of the enterprise. Mandeville's principle is crumbling in the face of the realization that this new principle of responsibility is the best hope for the future of our country and our society, and perhaps for the future of all of Western society. To make certain that the principle of management's responsibility to the enterprise and to society does not remain merely lip service but becomes hard fact is thus the most important, the ultimate responsibility of management—to itself, to the enterprise, to our heritage, to our society, and to our way of life.

(If you want to write a book—or escape from the Continental)
(police, or from yourself—if you want to retire to the Isle)
(of Calm—or drink the best gin fizz in the world, Majorca)
(may be the place for you. . . . But there are a few “buts.”)



Majorca for Living

Charles W. Thayer

Drawings by Fred Zimmer

NEARLY two thousand years ago a Roman writer maintained that if poisonous snakes were brought to Majorca they would lose their venom. Ships sailing to Majorca, he said, never were wrecked. Majorcans, he admitted, sometimes quarreled but never brawled. Recently a modern Majorcan enthusiast pointed out that no airplane bound for Majorca has ever crashed. Though motor accidents occur, people rarely get hurt. The trams, he says, are “the most adorably slow in the world.” And he concludes: “Majorca is anti-catastrophic.”

My wife and I had verified these claims on several brief visits to Palma. So when we decided to leave government service and wanted a place to pitch camp for a while, there was no question whatever as to where we would go. Stowing cribs, bicycles, books, three dogs, and a canary in an old jeep and trailer, and the baggage and two children in another car, we cruised leisurely down across Europe to Barcelona and from there by boat to Palma. We made straight for the northernmost, remotest part of the island around Pollensa, where we soon found a small villa in a secluded cove. There for fifteen months we lived in almost complete seclusion.

Majorca boasts that it is the Island of Calm but we quickly found out the calm is usually the other fellow's. When cisterns leak, toilets don't flush, and lights don't function it is not always easy to wait with the placid calm of the mason or plumber or electrician who promises he'll be around to fix things *mañana*. “Electricity,” the local electrician once told us “is a very mysterious thing.” So far as Majorca is concerned he was certainly right.

Before we moved into our villa the landlord warned us that the power line had not yet been connected with the house. “But” he said, with appropriate gestures, “it is just a matter of connecting two small wires.” It developed, however, that between the two small wires stood a long and bitter lawsuit between the landlord and the owner of the local power line. Before the lawsuit was settled we had learned to live by kerosene lamps and to hand-pump water from the basement cistern to the gravity tank below the roof.

Finally one day a neighbor came running down to us as we lay sunning ourselves on the beach and shouted breathlessly: “*Hay luz* (there is light)!” Thereafter there was light and power to run the pump—occasionally. Often during daylight the power plant shut

down for no more apparent reason than to conform with the local tradition of siesta.

One stormy winter evening there was a blinding flash of lightning through the window. For a second the light fixtures gave off a wonderful blue flame, then went dead. I wrapped an old hunting cape around me and went out to see what had happened. It was snowing wildly and the ground was covered with four inches of slush. According to local fable, it never snows in Majorca. A hundred yards away high in the tree tops a strange light was burning brightly. When I got closer I made out the top of an electric light pole flaming merrily in the gale.

In the course of the next week after I had taken innumerable jeep rides to the town of Pollensa to fetch electricians, foremen, and carpenters, the power line was repaired, but it took a personal appeal to the Governor of the Balearics before the power company could be persuaded to restore the current.

The New Moon and the Hounds of Hell

AS SOON as we were installed we set about planting a garden. We were told by our neighbors that planting was out of the question except at the new moon. For ten days we waited for the new moon and then impatiently assembled our seedlings and started to work. Again our neighbors intervened with the warning that planting before sunset was madness. So for several more hours we sat and waited. As the sun disappeared behind the mountain we set to digging and planting and watering. It was nearly midnight before the job was done. Our hands were a mass of blisters and our backs half-crippled from bending over and hacking at the baked soil with the miniature picks which take the place of shovels, spades, hoes, and rakes in Majorca. Our neighbors were full of praise: "In two months," they said, "the flowers will be over your heads." But the gods decreed otherwise. Hardly had the seedlings taken root when a late spring gale whipped the sea into gigantic waves and sent clouds of spray far inland till the air was gray with salt. Next day our precious seedlings were a withered blackened mass.

We waited for another moon and another sunset and tried again. This time the sea behaved better and the seedlings sprouted to a

respectable size. Geranium cuttings which we'd planted in giant Ali Baba jars bloomed magnificently in every shade of pink. Then one night we were awakened by strange noises on the terrace. About a dozen sheep, half-wild pigs, and goats had come down off the mountain and were swarming over the flower beds. Before I could chase them away every last geranium blossom had been nibbled off and every minute seedling uprooted. We didn't try gardening any more.



One night our daughter woke up to find a sheep nuzzling affectionately at her pillow. After that we built a fence around our back terrace to keep the wild life out of the bedrooms. But they continued to visit us regularly: wild pigs, goats, sheep, and even five mules led by a diminutive but noisy donkey. Once one of the servants took pity on the thirsty mules and gave them a pail of water. Thereafter every day until the rainy season they came and brayed forlornly in the lane in front of the house till water was produced.

Besides the creatures of the mountain we were regularly visited by a local pack of *Ibizenkos*—the native dogs of the Balearics, long, thin, pale chestnut beasts like greyhounds with pointed ears and red eyes. Robert Graves, the English novelist who lives permanently in Majorca, claims they are the descendants of the original "Hounds of Hell" of Egypt brought over by the Phoenicians

centuries ago. Their striking resemblance to the hideous beasts depicted in old Italian paintings of the inferno seems to confirm the belief. But they were a cowardly lot and would slink up past the house to the garbage heap only when our own dogs were out or asleep. Even our diminutive Pekingese could send them scuttling away into the bushes with their tails between their legs.

Time and Courtesy

THROUGH friends we met a considerable number of permanent Majorcan residents—officers of the Spanish Army, Navy, and Air Force and members of old families who all seem to have come over from the mainland on a sort of Majorcan Mayflower with Jaime the Conqueror who drove out the Moors in the thirteenth century.

Not long after our arrival we were invited to tea by one of the local landowners. His huge stone manor house set back in the mountains overlooked miles of olive groves and wheat fields stretching to the sea. A worn, covered stone staircase led from an inner court to the living quarters. As our host led us through a series of ballrooms and galleries he explained that these were the "modern" wing, built in the eighteenth century. With some pride he showed us a small room with a basin. "The bathroom," he announced proudly. The rest of the house had been built in the thirteenth century.

The owner had five vivacious daughters whom he kept on a very tight rein. However, he had to be in Palma on business each week from Monday to Thursday. On these days you were apt to see the five young ladies gadding about the countryside visiting friends in a carriage drawn by an old gray horse. But when the old man returned on Thursdays he invariably found his five daughters just as he had left them, sitting demurely in the drawing room bent over their needlework.

One summer afternoon a yeoman of the Spanish Navy appeared at our house and announced to us that the Admiral's yacht was in the cove and we were invited aboard for a cup of after-lunch coffee. As it was already after five o'clock I asked when the Admiral would be getting around to his coffee and the sailor estimated that, judging by the speed of the noonday meal thus far, he'd be finished

around six. Promptly at six we presented ourselves at the beach and were rowed out to the big German-built rescue craft which had been converted into a yacht after the Spanish Civil War.

No sooner were we on board and introduced to the large company of Spanish officers and their wives than I saw the rowboat being hauled aboard. In another moment the two big diesel engines were started up and we were roaring out to sea at forty knots. Slightly bewildered I asked our host where we were headed. "I thought we might all have a little swim at La Calobra on the other side of the island," he answered. I knew that La Calobra was a good eighty miles by sea, so we settled down to a pleasant cruise under the high cliffs which shone a brilliant red in the rays of the setting sun. Eventually we reached La Calobra, did a little mountain climbing, had a swim, returned to port, and reached home promptly at one-thirty in the morning.

SHOPKEEPERS, postmen, telegraph clerks, and workmen were just as indifferent to time—and as hospitable. As long as we recognized the strict Spanish rules of courtesy, they were as meticulous as old-world courtiers. When we went shopping in Pollensa there was only one thing we needed—plenty of time. At the general store our entrance was always quickly communicated to the owner, who lived across the street, and an invitation was brought back to come over for a "little glass." After several glasses of incredibly sweet, sticky local liqueur we would be permitted to go back to the store to make our purchase. As we reached for our money, the owner's daughter invariably drew back as though she'd seen a mouse: "Money?" she'd cry, horrified, "but you know you mustn't pay!" Majorca is the only place I've ever found where you have to hire a lawyer to get your bills presented.

We were regular clients of the telegraph office where we often had to send long and expensive cables—always against the advice of the telegrapher who couldn't believe that any cable was worth what the tariff book prescribed. Then one day I had to send a brief wire to Palma which cost only three or four pesetas. When I started to pay, the clerk looked at me disdainfully: "My dear Señor, must we bother with such trifles? Let's wait

till you have a real cable to pay for." Keeping a bank account was just as lackadaisical. Once I stopped at the village bank to find out what my balance was. The manager named some astronomical figure which I knew was wrong and I suggested he check his books. "That's what it was when we last balanced the books two weeks ago," he answered politely but firmly, "and that's what it's going to be till we can get around to it again."

Soon after we arrived we bought an icebox in Palma and arranged with a trucker to deliver it. One morning a week later, the house boy announced that the icebox was down at the foot of the lane. "The truck driver," he explained, "asked the milk boy to tell us he couldn't get through the lane so he left the box on the main road yesterday." The idea of my expensive icebox sitting unguarded on the edge of the main road was unnerving, and I hurried down with the jeep and trailer to fetch it. But I needn't have worried. There sitting tranquilly under an olive tree was the icebox, together with half a dozen other parcels we'd bought. When I expressed my relief that nothing was missing, the house boy gave me a withering look: "Majorcans don't take other people's things," he said.

The Battle of the Christians and Moors

LIKE any other Spanish town, Pollensa has almost as many fiestas as there are days in the year. The two most important are the Good Friday Procession and the annual battle of the Christians and Moors commemorating the repulse of a Moorish attack four centuries ago. The Good Friday Procession we saw started at dark from the Cemetery Chapel at the top of Calvary Hill overlooking the town and wound slowly down a long stone staircase to the main church. Small boys carrying candles, penitents in pointed hoods, husky young men bearing holy images, and the important men of the town, who paused and shook hands with us, made up the march. The climax came midway: a life-sized reclining figure of Christ, delicately veiled in black lace.

The Battle of the Moors and the Christians is a much more lively affair. To watch it we were invited by the general storekeeper to use his balcony on the main street. Though

we arrived a half-hour late, it was another hour before the show began. Meantime the entire town paraded back and forth along the street in its Sunday best, waving gaily to the handful of snobs who sat in the balconies above. Then the street was cleared and half a dozen mounted men in bizarre costumes conspicuously decorated with the Moorish crescent galloped down the street brandishing wooden swords and shields and yelling bloody murder. Behind them came a mob of young men similarly dressed, also waving swords and shouting wildly. When they reached the Place of the Cock they were suddenly set upon by another crowd carrying staves and wearing nightshirts. "Our ancestors," the storekeeper explained, "were still in bed when the Moors attacked during the night."

Beating staves and swords against each other's shields, the crowd gradually surged back along the main street. In the center of the melee a Moor with a papier-mâché crown was taking a considerable beating from a huge nightshirted Christian representing the local hero, Juan Mas. Occasionally the two paused for breath and waved genially at the crowds in the balconies above. As they passed us I recognized the Moorish King as the postmaster and the giant hero, Juan Mas, as the garage mechanic. They both grinned broadly up at us and then set to again. Gradually they worked their way down the street and out onto the football field where the battle raged joyously for another hour, until it was almost dark.

ALTHOUGH tourists swarm all over the island during the summer months, there is a curious sort of wall between them and the more permanent foreign residents of Majorca. The tourists seldom penetrate the spots which the Spanish, Majorcan, or foreign inhabitants frequent. There are of course many more or less permanent guests on the island and they fall into various categories. A few like Robert Graves, the British novelist, and Anton Zischka, the Austrian writer-economist, have made it their permanent working headquarters. Many others are retired diplomatic, army, or navy couples from England and America. Depending on the size of their pensions they lead a relatively luxurious but quiet existence. Some of them

are leisurely writing their memoirs, others simply play bridge, sail, fish, and swim. Those who can afford it keep their houses full of vacationing friends whom they drive about the island to show the sights. You may find them in Chopin's apartments at Valdemosa, or at the spectacular caves of Arta and Drach, or motoring along the magnificent *corniche* road from Soller to Deya where Archduke Max of Austria had his famous palace. Sometimes you'll see them at the Bar Formentor, Palma's principle café, where they are easily distinguished by their quiet clothes and mild manners. Their lives are very pleasant and full enough for the taste of anyone who has learned to relax. Each has already made his mark in the world, and each is prepared to enjoy life and his favorite hobby, whether it be writing or reading or collecting antiques or just sunbathing.

Another category of foreigners is the escapers, of whom Majorca has its fair share. According to gossip a few are escaping from the continental police, others from the higher moral code of the mainland. Others are getting away from nothing more than speed and noise. For appearances' sake some will tell you they are writing a novel or getting ready to paint some pictures. Some will admit with charming frankness that they're too lazy to compete. One girl who lives in a remote cove with her philosopher-husband and four small children told me quite simply: "We came for our honeymoon and we liked it." Some will tell you they are escaping from the high cost of gin, and a few are just ordinary drunks. "With martinis at twenty cents," one of them told me, "I can't afford not to drink. In Majorca I save fifty cents with every cocktail and if I can only hold enough, some day I'll be rich."

Some of the escapers have private incomes that permit them to live in considerable luxury in large villas teeming with butlers, footmen, and maids. Others have holed-up in

tiny pensions whence they emerge only to slip into the nearest bar for a pink gin or a martini.

Many of them congregate around the Plaza Gomila, an attractive little square on the western outskirts of Palma where there are at least seven bars with the best gin fizzes in the world and one of the finest restaurants in Spain—the Patio. The newsboys of the Plaza sell newspapers in every European language, including, occasionally, Spanish.

The escapers are usually recognizable by their informal clothes—a bright shirt, colored shorts, and rope-soled slippers. Sometimes they suffer under long heavy beards as though even a razor was too much to contend with. Except for their shirts they are not a loud crowd. In fact they always struck me as a little sad and lonely.

Unlike the tourists who shriek about the bargains they have just found, the escapers have generally adopted the subdued tones of the islanders and even when drunk seem anxious to keep out of the limelight and out of trouble. Though the local Spaniards and Majorcans are very strict in their public deportment and wouldn't be seen on the street in shorts, they accept the foibles and eccentricities

of foreigners with cosmopolitan tolerance as long as the precious "*Calma*" of the island is undisturbed. The Civil Governor of the Balearics told us that with a few exceptions, foreigners give the local police no trouble.

The Island of Calm

THERE is still another category of non-tourist Majorcans: those who come for six months or a year or two, for some more or less specific purpose: to write a book which they are really writing or to paint real pictures or to take a real vacation between real jobs. In many ways Majorca is ideal for these purposes: It is gorgeously beautiful. The air is so clear and the light so extraordi-



nary that it is unequalled for painting. Most of the year the climate is perfect. And, of course, it is still cheaper than almost any other accessible spot in Europe.

Some who have come only for a prolonged vacation have bought houses and settled down for good—or at least for a part of each year. For the first months after our arrival we, too, were bewitched by the beauty, the peace, and the ease of the island and seriously considered buying a place and using it as a base from which to travel and write. Egged on by a small fanatical sect of mill-worshippers who have converted old peasant mills into fabulously attractive homes, we inspected innumerable ruins and farms. Several times we were on the point of buying only to be stopped by some legal or technical hitch: one mill we were determined to buy belonged partly to an old ogre known locally as the Catalan and partly to the carpenter's sister and was occupied by the baker. For weeks we and our friends conspired with the Catalan, the baker, and the carpenter—none of whose names we knew. But nothing came of it.

Another time after lengthy research in archives going back to the days of the Moors it developed that the mill we wanted had lost its water rights some decades ago. But these were disappointments for which, eventually, we were thankful. In the end we decided that despite its obvious advantages Majorca was not the best place for us.

THE impassable lane, the absence of telephones, the vagaries of the telegraph, the informality of postal deliveries have their charms only up to a point—unless of course you are prepared to cut yourself off completely from day-to-day events and maintain contact with the world through occasional visitors, the local paper, and the radio. When you find yourself wasting half a day at the telephone office waiting for a call to get through to Madrid or Paris; when telegrams announcing the arrival of cruising friends are delivered after their ship has come and gone; when you can't get a seat on plane or boat without asking friends to arrange it through pull, and finally when your manuscripts airmailed to New York to meet a deadline take six weeks instead of the usual five days because some curious mail clerk found the manuscript worth reading, you may feel flat-

tered, but the charm of the calm island momentarily escapes you.

There's nothing to blame except that you chose to live on an island. Islands are bound to make postal clerks and everyone else inquisitive. Your Spanish friends are outraged that you didn't ask them to pull wires to get a plane seat. The delivery boy looks heartbroken on learning the wire was delivered two days late—after all no one told him it was urgent.

YET these little frustrations don't explain it all. It is perhaps less the feeling that you can't get out that troubles you, than the fear of what may happen if you stay too long. There are the vacationing friends who want you to vacation with them. There is always the temptation to lie idly in the sun and watch the changing colors of the sea and the cliffs, to float effortlessly for hours with goggles and breathing tube on the water and watch the fish and octopuses and lobsters scuttling among the brilliant coral and seaweed five fathoms below you; to sit in an olive grove watching for a shy nightingale or a gaudy hoopoe or a brilliant golden oriole; or even to rest peacefully in a sidewalk café sipping martinis and munching olives stuffed with anchovy. Eventually you find yourself so preoccupied with fighting off the spell of the lotus that you have no energy left for anything else.

After fifteen months on the island we have a few words of advice to prospective residents: if you're ready to quit and have the will to readjust your tempo to the stately leisure of Spain, go to Majorca, buy a house (with central heating), and pull in your lines—but not all of them. For at least once a year you'll want to go off for a change to the continent or the "peninsula," as the islanders contemptuously call the mainland of Spain. If you've a book to write or a picture to paint or a symphony to compose, go to Majorca, take a house till your work is finished, and then go away. Or if you've plenty of money and lots of vacation time, buy a place in Majorca near the sea and spend your holidays in unrivaled bliss. And finally: don't go to Majorca in winter and expect to be warm. There is nothing colder than a summer resort in winter and Majorca is the summer resort par excellence.

(Twenty-eight teacher-students in an extension course in American literature became a nightmare problem to their unhappy professor. How illiterate can you be, he wondered, and go on teaching in our public schools? Here is his line-by-line review of the evidence.)

Can Our Teachers Read and Write?

James D. Koerner

THERE has long been a suspicion in university circles that a large number of teachers in our primary and secondary schools are totally incompetent for the job. Generally, this suspicion has remained just that, because most college teachers have no opportunity for first-hand observation, because proof is difficult under any circumstances, and because the whole subject is a delicate one. However, to my own astonishment, I have recently turned up a great deal of specific evidence to support the fears of the colleges.

As a teacher in a large Midwestern university, I was asked last February if I would teach an extension course in American literature to twenty-eight primary and secondary-school teachers from around the state who were required to maintain their qualification records with regular work of this sort. Such an adult and professional group promised to be stimulating and I took the job. But when we got started on the weekly meetings of two and one-half hours each, and I began to read the brief papers that the students handed in, I suffered misgiving, disbelief, shock, horror, wrath, and apathy—in something like that order. For in the broad sense of the word, these men and women were downright, hopelessly illiterate.

After a serene initial meeting, which gave no hint of what was to follow, I determined to make the material and the conduct of the

class the same as in the regular undergraduate courses at the university. I also adopted a teaching device that I had found effective with freshman and sophomore students: giving out each week a set of questions of graduated difficulty that allowed the student to pick his own level, that could be answered in a few minutes, and that showed up how much each person had got on his own hook from the reading assignments.

The first papers happened to be on Mark Twain, and they went like this:

He explained how, although Huck's actual experiences and doings were quite outwardly boyish and mischievous through his inward thoughts and reasoning the author conveyed to the reader, although Huck didn't realize it himself, he knew the difference between right and wrong.

[Or like this:] Huck did not have harsh feelings of anyone—His conscense bother him oftens but he over came it by getting it off his chest whatever bother him. It told the truth of a boy who had trial and troubles but it seem to me it never bog him down.

[And this:] One particular instanse as he was apparently moving over its brown muddy water, when traveling with Jim toward the Ohio, and freedom for Jim, he felt his conviction of doing wrong according to law, but in each instanse the affairs

& business of transportation seem always to create a change of such thoughts until he decided it knew best so why not let events take its course.

Other papers were studded with phrases like "these mens pranks," "not an disillusionment," "would of acted," "his fathers name," and "his prestege over any one elses." I am quoting these passages exactly as they appeared on the page, changing nothing.

AT THE following week's meeting I delivered myself of a stirring pronouncement on standards. My students took heed and were genuinely frightened. I asked them to hand me brief statements about themselves from which I learned that most of the twenty-eight had had a considerable amount of college work from institutions around the state and elsewhere, but only a few had finished college; most were primary teachers, teaching several different grades; and almost all of them taught English as one of their subjects. Some had taught thirty years, some two or three, the average for the group being about ten. All were native born, had no language problem, as such, and taught in schools that varied from one-room rurals to city schools of about a thousand students. The most illiterate eight or nine, I noted, were employed in the larger city schools, usually teaching the upper primary grades.

When I got to the second week's papers, I realized that any talk about standards was useless because the problem was not, as I had hoped, one of carelessness; but, as I had feared, one of ignorance. Choosing more or less at random from the second lot and the remaining weeks' papers, written on a number of different topics, I find a plethora of statements (each from a different teacher) like the following: ". . . he ran away supposidly to New Mexico"; "Antonia left Nebraska because she was in love with this man. They say people in love are blind and this I somewhat think sort of proves it"; "She returned home pregnate and had a girl at her old home she later married and had a large family"; "She was happy because she had a fine family, a good stabel home, and live where she had lost her father who she worshiped"; "These human experiences show—plainly the hardships and failurs of indi-

viduals in the 1880's. Their achievment or goodness and fulfilment to overcome these experiences."

Perhaps you recognize what these writers were driving at better than I did: ". . . he seems much more mature having met many crisis such as the demerits the plane crashing on the Cain when the captain jumped etc."; "Rubashov signs the confession and declares himself after this endless mentally abuse-ment"; "The relationship between his cell mates practically shows the uselessness of his cause—an an anti-rautionist ['Revolutionist,' I assume, or perhaps 'Russianist']"; "Ivanov was a buddy of Rubashov they grew up together were in college to-gether & members of the same previous click"; "The controversy over the 'Grapes of Wrath' is an example. O'Neils work is another example"; "He seems to have a perfect understanding of humans and likes to dwells on the gamulet of emotions"; "He writes in a very plain spoken way saying things as they are. He is not afraid to call a spade to use a slang phrase"; "Naturalism came into the short stories at the turn of the century. It picks out moral creation of characters envirement"; "Romanticism has ideals he upholds and writes how he would want it"; "That is one thing a great many present day books do. They are to phycological—to much above the average readers head. They become obsessed with one idea and go to far."

And finally, just to illustrate the way in which my thoughts occasionally come back to me with, as Emerson has it, "a certain alienated majesty": "Hemingway works is the beginning of all modern American Literature. He dosen't write too much conversation in his books. Just enough to make the idea go across and his discriptions are brief with many adverbs."

I COULD go on. Perhaps the above examples illustrate well enough the average kind of problem in grammar, spelling, and punctuation that characterized the class. But beyond the mere mechanics of communication loomed the all but insurmountable obstacle of communicating the simplest literary idea. Consider, for example, the following passages taken from the final examinations and from the reports written *outside* of class. Again I choose pretty much at

random (there are, that is, half a hundred more which I could exhibit of the same quality):

In using images on a screen reflects the value of vivid and true expression needed to move and audience emotionally. This play give a clear picture of the mothers memory of youthful romance. The character Jim and Laura illustrate the value of two who had similar experiences; but Lauras whose self conscionous was placed more vivid on the screen. [*The Glass Menagerie*.]

The power of O'Niel seems to be his skill of stage affects which give added effect to the spoken word. . . . In the character of the Emperor in the woods, the use of Tom toms coming closer. Visions and supposed visions of Joneses dealings in the chain gang led the actor to relive Jones feelings of the actual time. It cast a spell over Jones so that he feels—cant express myself here.

The stronger voice is showing the events that has happened in his life. Charts and diagrams of all the good and bad things in life he did with special empahsis on their totals with some extractions. . . . He was place in this large court room or decision room where all cases were pronounced. The leader was giving the long lost lecture. Most of the time was silent but applause was heard at intervals probably to better their record of life. [Whitman's "When I Heard the Learn'd Astronomer."]

America was a new country. Nothing of culture existed. The prime interest of the people who came here was establishing of a home or they were runners away from injustices in Europe. (Not entirely but as a whole) There was writing in America before the Civil War and many good ones, but their work is either biographic or historic and contained nothing new. . . . The best of this group of verses is "The Song of Myself," in which he places himself as the leave of grass . . . In 1920 [the author was old enough to have lived through the First World War as an adult] America was plunged into a European war. Not much literature developed during the war.

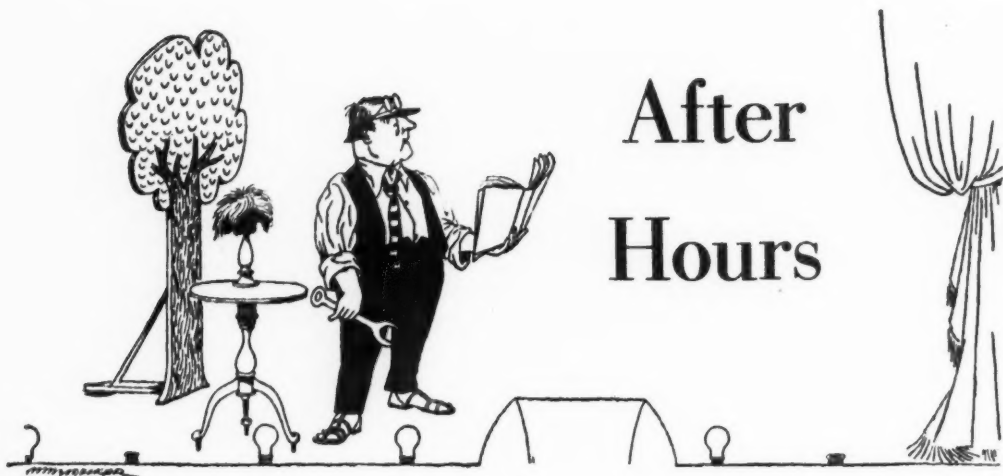
America had not experienced many social adjustments and the works of this period were not outstanding except to tell a few war antidotes.

Ad infinitum. I think that there was no error of grammar or mechanics, of organization or general composition, that was not perpetrated by this class of teachers, not once, but many times, and despite repeated corrections. Syntactically their papers were a chaos, the punctuation a farce, the spelling a grim joke. As further examples of the last, consider such spellings as *eminsly* — *immencely* — *accidently* — *imprisonment* — *controll* — *immagined* — *immeigrants* — *symobols* — *tence* — *oblidged* — *succeed* — *reliabile* — *exccutation* — *ciper* — *occurr* — *factional* (for fictional) — *dramits* (for dramatists)—*gilt* (for guilt)—*reliefed* (for relieved) — and *harmous* (for harmonious).

AS FOR the other details of the class, the discussions, and the subjective conclusions and intangibles that remain after any course: I leave all that to the reader's imagination. I confine myself to the facts, the most obvious of which is that these twenty-eight teachers could not communicate in the English language. And, as should be equally obvious, my intention is not to malign or discredit this particular group, all of whom were sincere people and most of whom were desirous of doing whatever was in their power about their professional shortcomings. I wish mostly to pose the question: How widespread in the teaching profession is the kind of illiteracy revealed here—and what can be done about it? Perhaps my experience is an isolated one. I doubt it; with reason. I suspect that it is duplicated many times each year around the country.

If someone were to ask me, and someone has, the nastiest question of all: What did you do about it?—I would beg him to remember, among other things, that *these teachers* either pass such courses or change professions, an event that would be disastrous for their private lives.

I passed 'em. What would you have done?



Rural Invasion

I AM the most imitated comedian who ever lived," said Neil Schaffner. He smeared cold cream on his face until he glistened like a cut-glass chandelier, then with a couple of wipes of a towel what had been a freckled and red-eyed country bumpkin became a middle-aged businessman with a nearly bald head, gray at the temples.

Mr. Schaffner and I were sitting in his dressing room, which was a truck backed up to a trestle stage. "I've been in the tent show business for twenty-nine years," he said. "There used to be three hundred of these shows. Now there are only seven left."

Fourteen hundred miles is a long way to go to see something that calls itself "America's only living folk theater," but that is what I had done. It was authentic all right, folks, and it was theater. It was even living. Its name was the "Toby and Susie Show" and it happened in a tent (called a "top"). I first saw it in a town of about 2,100 people called Shelbina, Missouri, roughly 160 miles northwest of St. Louis, in hog and corn and soy-bean country. There were about a thousand people in the tent on the Friday night I arrived there, and they were slapping their thighs and whistling and laughing their heads off. Neil Schaffner was Toby. His wife was Susie.

I was there as a hanger-on to a group of professional movie-makers. They had asked me to come along and watch them make a

film about this piece of "Americana" for "Omnibus," the Ford Foundation's television show. One of these professionals was Richard Leacock, the photographer who had manned the camera for Flaherty when he made "Louisiana Story," the other was Boris D. Kaplan, the TV-movie expert of the Ford Foundation. They knew what they were doing; I carried a notebook and scribbled in it to look as though I knew what I was doing there too. I don't think I fooled anybody.

The second night we were in Shelbina, an amiable fellow named Kevin Smith rolled into town in a singularly insubstantial old station wagon with twenty-five or thirty thousand dollars' worth of cameras, sound equipment, cables, lights, and tripods. He had driven from New York, and when he arrived, work on the movie of the tent show went into phase two. Phase one was talk, talk, talk, scribble, scribble, scribble until a script was organized. Phase two was the process of getting the tent show on film and sound track.

This process was one of the pleasantest examples of what is commonly called "public relations" that I have ever seen. Actually it was simply a group of sensible, friendly men who knew their business, going about it in such a way that everyone with whom they had anything to do liked and respected them. But I am getting ahead of my story.

Shelbina was mostly phase one, where most of the planning took place and where some

of the opening shots of the movie were made. Phase two happened in full force in the town of La Plata, about fifty miles further north. The "Toby and Susie" show plays a town for a week, every night, and then picks up and moves on to another town. Its season starts late in May and ends early in October and usually includes twenty towns. There is a different three-act play every night, with vaudeville between the acts. ("You never give the audience a chance to think," Schaffner told me.)

Most of the plays feature Toby, the red-faced, red-wigged bumpkin who blunders into righting all the wrongs that the sophisticated folk precipitate. "He's typical Mr. Rural Midwest," Schaffner explained. "He says all the things these folks wish they'd thought of." All of the plays are written by Schaffner; they are used by other tent shows and his manner of playing Toby has become standard. "On Sunday nights," he explained, "we always give them a bedroom farce."

ON SUNDAY night the cast takes the tent down. With the help of local boys they stow the chairs in a truck, and at the crack of Monday morning they are on the road—six trucks of tent and chairs and stage and props; most of the seventeen members of the cast (who are also the crew) ride in their own cars pulling the trailers in which they live during their season. On the Monday morning we were in Shelbina, Leacock and Smith were on the road before the show left town in order to photograph it en route and to get shots of the tent going up in the village green, as it would be called in New England, or the city park, as it is called in La Plata.

La Plata is a pleasant town of about 1,300 people with a park filled with elm trees and surrounded on three sides by shops and offices in two- and three-story buildings. On the fourth side are the railroad tracks and set down among the park trees was the tent—the first time it had been permitted to be there. In former years it had been pitched on the schoolhouse grounds, but this occasion was special because of the interest of "Omni-bus" in making a movie, and the mayor, to the considerable consternation of some of the citizens, had permitted the tent to be set up among the elms. Benches, on which at almost any time of day there are men playing check-

ers, were moved and the trailer homes of the cast were drawn up, pink and blue and red.

From Schaffner's point of view the fact that his tent show was being made into a movie was "good business." Schaffner is a "small businessman" running a business with a long tradition in the Middle West, and he makes enough in his twenty weeks of touring to live comfortably in Sarasota, Florida, during the winter. There he fishes and contrives his plays. In the spring he gets his cast together (his opinion of most dramatic schools is unprintable) and for two weeks before they start touring he rehearses them. In these two weeks they learn seven plays.

Most of the members of the cast spend their winters playing "school dates" and "club dates" doing their vaudeville specialties—chalk talks, song and dance numbers, marionettes. One of them, J. B. Flesner, an ex-Marine captain who is in charge of setting up and taking down the tent, plays the villain roles. He's a magician and hypnotist, and is Schaffner's right-hand man. Schaffner's troupe work hard for him; no job is too menial and none too lordly. But not all of them are faithful. He's as likely as not to lose his leading juvenile with no notice (he did this summer) or to have his ingenue find greener pastures than the tough life of trouping.

His greatest worry is weather. "When there's a drought," he said to me, "the farmers won't spend their money. When it rains between six and seven it will cut our audience in half. If we get a really bad storm we can lose our tent. We've lost it just twice and it costs about \$5,000 to replace it." There was one storm while we were there that had the crew out shoring up the ropes; the quarter poles inside were swinging free as the wind billowed under the canvas.

THE quality of the "Toby and Susie" shows bears little relation to the theater in cities. It is crude, but it is not burlesque; indeed it is a "family show" in which the only questionable humor is of the bathroom type. The plays are all comedies of a sort, some of them with elaborate plots interspersed with familiar gags and familiar situations which the audience would be disappointed if they didn't find.

"I ride the running board of the show," Schaffner explained, "half in it and half out

of it." He'll stop a scene in mid-flight and make the actors repeat their lines. If he doesn't think the audience is applauding loudly enough, he'll scold them.

"Is that the best you can do?" he says to them. "I'll go out and come in again." When he reappears the applause is twice as loud. The audience comes expecting to be entertained and to help the show be a success, and in the small towns he plays he will get audiences of a thousand a night for seven nights. Many of his customers pay their 50¢ admission seven nights running, and an extra quarter for a seat. Fifty cents gets you into the tent and a place in what is called "the blues," or the benches in the back of the tent.

The fact that the show and the audiences were being photographed entertained the customers in La Plata, who were full of questions to the camera crew. Many La Platians were asked to help in one way or another, as actors in some scenes in the tent and the village street, in restaurants and shops; and (with a single exception) they were eager to do anything they could to make a success of the show. One prominent business-

man declined to help. Otherwise nothing seemed to be too much trouble, and no crew could have worked in a more friendly atmosphere nor could any crew have been more considerate of the community.

When Schaffner comes into town with his show, most of the boys and girls recognize him and greet him with cries of "Hi Toby!" Leacock wanted to get some sound track of children calling to him and he corralled four kids about nine or ten years old and lined them up in front of a microphone in the park. "You shout 'Hi Toby!'" he said to one of them, "and then you next to him count five and then you shout, and then you, and then you." The three boys and a girl did as they were told, their voices singing out lustily. Morgan Smith was at his sound controls getting their shouts on tape. When they were through Kevin Smith gave each of the kids a quarter.

One of the boys struck with the reality of everything he had ever heard about the wonders of movies and of TV stared down at the quarter in his hand a look of astonishment on his face. "For yelling *once?*" he asked.



The Big Bang

EVERYONE KNOWS that nature imitates art, that life imitates literature, and that there is nothing new under the sun; but there is one fable I never thought to see enacted in our time, and that is the story of Chicken Little. You will remember that in this tale the word got around that the sky had fallen, with a consequent confusion that should serve as a warning to all directors of civil defense, weather forecasters, and any others concerned with the mysteries of public response to crisis—or, more accurately, what people think is a crisis. The story I propose to tell contains an essential uncertainty as to whether its crisis was real or imaginary, but here I can only defer to the reader's judgment

and proceed with the narrative. Our subject is the curious event which took place this August in Melrose, Massachusetts.

Melrose (pop. approx. 27,000) is a quiet suburb north of Boston, the home town of Geraldine Farrar and Brooks Atkinson of the *New York Times*, which has long enjoyed a reputation for the sober virtues—you used to be able to send letters to Melrose addressed only to "Spotlesstown, Mass." On August 30, 1954, at 5:50 in the afternoon, when many good citizens were coming home from Boston or just sitting down to supper, two loud explosions were heard in Melrose, centering apparently on the railroad station but shaking buildings, rattling windows and dishes, and cracking plaster in other towns for ten miles around.

The first reaction of many people indoors was to suppose the house next door had exploded, and many came out in the streets to see. Seeing nothing, they went inside to call the police or fire departments; and before long the telephone lines were so crowded that in some cases there was a half-hour wait before the caller could get a dial tone. The local civil-defense units, including six radio cars, went into action; and auxiliary firemen and policemen turned up at their central headquarters. Police and fire apparatus were shortly on the way to answer calls—one lady who said her oil burner had exploded and another who claimed to have seen an airplane crash—which might conceivably explain the explosions. But so far, as a matter of fact, no one in Melrose knew what had happened.

ENTER the mass media. One of the many fantasies in circulation at this point was that a jet plane had exploded in mid-air over Melrose, and the rumor gained vast currency when it went out over television in the Boston area as a news bulletin. Whereupon, for reasons which should give us pause, the idea seems to have spread through every Middlesex village and farm of getting out the family car and taking off to inspect the wreckage. From all directions—from Malden, Wyoming, Wakefield, Stoneham, Everett, Winchester, Somerville, Reading, Revere, and Saugus—the curious and the otherwise unoccupied converged on Melrose, fifty thousand strong. Many were sufficiently foresighted to bring cameras. Before long the main roads into Melrose were snarled in a jam that took two hours to untangle, and even the town's back streets were crowded with cruising sight-seers in search for the place "where the plane blew up." There was, to be sure, no plane; there was nothing at all.

And in this respect Melrose was fortunate, for by this time nothing could have been done about a disaster even had anyone been able to locate one. The police cars and fire trucks that had gone out on half a dozen false alarms had now been ordered to cruise around town and await orders, but they were as swallowed in the universal melee as everyone else; other equipment could hardly have reached the street.

"Cars were parked in such volume close to fire stations . . ." reported the Boston *Herald*,

"that it would have meant long delays before apparatus could have been maneuvered by them to run for a fire." After a while, the combined forces of volunteer and regular policemen put on traffic duty began to disentangle the worst of the traffic tie-ups (one was five miles long) and by nighttime Melrose had come roughly back to normal.

There isn't much doubt, in retrospect, what caused the sounds that set this hulla-baloo in motion; but for unrelated reasons it is impossible, and will probably remain impossible, to prove it. Air Force regulations, to be direct, forbid unauthorized flights through the sound barrier. Hundreds of persons eventually reported seeing a vapor trail such as a jet might cause, and if a "high-spirited young pilot" (the words of an Air Force colonel in a press conference on the matter) had cut loose at supersonic speed the effects would have been very similar to those experienced. But the nearest base with jet planes has said that none of their pilots reported being over Melrose at the time and that the Air Force wasn't convinced that an airplane had made the noise. If that were established to be the fact, the pilot would have to be dishonorably discharged. "We take a dim view of this . . ." the colonel said. "The Air Force is stern about buzz jobs"—even buzzing the sound barrier, apparently.

SO THERE the matter rests—an accident soon to be forgotten, of interest largely to students of involuntary symbolism. Possibly the Melrose Incident, if we may give it that title, will survive longer than I think if it turns out to have been typical of the '50s in somewhat the same way that we think Orson Welles' Martian invasion typical of the '30s. On the other hand, the people who were fooled by the Mercury Theater's famous radio program were both more careful and more credulous; they panicked more easily but they had more to be panicked at. The crowds who followed Chicken Little into Melrose, tying a highly organized community up into knots, were in simple search of something that simply did not exist. They were in close contact with the "news," curious, leisurely, and fully mechanized; they would not have walked a block to see a flying saucer. Such, friends, is progress.

—Mr. Harper

(The author of *The Reason Why*—a superb history of the Charge of the Light Brigade—reconstructs the strangely gay and eccentric atmosphere of the Crimean War . . . when wives came as guests to a battle . . . and tourists with picnic hampers roamed at will among the troops.)

The Last Romantic War

Cecil Woodham-Smith

IT IS a hundred years since the outbreak of the Crimean War in 1854. It was, of course, an important, and from a military point of view, a very interesting war, but it also deserves to be remembered for something else—eccentricity. The Crimean campaign was the most peculiar, the most casual, the most off-hand war; it was conducted with what can only be described as informality, and extraordinary occurrences took place. To begin with there was a large number of tourists, people went out to see the war in the Crimea for the fun of the thing, just as today people go to Europe for fun to see a big sporting event.

The British army had a name for these tourists. They were called TGs, "traveling gentlemen." The TGs called themselves "amateurs." From letters written home by the troops it is clear that TGs became an accepted part of army life. They come to call in the front line with presents of stores, tinned soup, Christmas puddings, ham, and brandy, they lend thick coats, with which the army was very badly provided, they wander about where they will, get up into the trenches and into the batteries, visit the hospitals, inspect the unloading of equipment, and no one makes the slightest objection.

Once they were home again they rushed into print. They wrote books with titles like *A Month in the Crimea*, *Wanderings Round Sebastopol*, *Our Tent in the Crimea*. The author of *Our Tent in the Crimea* describes how he and his brother arrived at Balaclava. The ship entered the harbor; they dressed "as quickly as boys on the first day of the holidays" and hurried on shore. No one asked them what they were doing and after staring round they began to explore. They passed "through camp after camp, through line after line of tents" and decided to pitch their tent with the 18th Regiment of Foot. They went up to an officer.

"We wish to pitch our tent in your camp the 18th."

The officer was most polite.

"Very well," he answered, "I'll see to getting you some ground."

This was no quiet position behind the lines. The Russians were keeping up a bombardment and a man's leg had just been taken off precisely where their tent was to be pitched.

"But you won't mind that," said the officer courteously. Indeed politeness in unexpected circumstances was a Crimean characteristic. A curious incident took place at the battle of Inkerman, which was a confused battle fought in fog. A British officer in command of a detachment saw his men were about to be overwhelmed and, catching sight of a group of British soldiers, rushed up to their officer asking for help.

"Excuse me," he said, "but we are in the dickens of a mess. Can you come over and help us? I was introduced to you last summer at Lady Palmerston's."

LORD CARDIGAN, of Light Brigade fame, had a friend Mr. Hubert de Burgh who brought out Lord Cardigan's yacht, the elegant and luxurious *Dryad*. After the yacht arrived Lord Cardigan was given permission to dine and sleep on his yacht every night. Though he was in command of the Light Cavalry Brigade, at one time he dined and slept every night seven miles away from his command. Mr. de Burgh held no official position but no one objected to his riding everywhere with Lord Cardigan. Mr. de Burgh appeared beside Lord Cardigan on inspections wearing "a flat brimmed bell topper, frock coat, and overalls strapped over patent leather boots." While the bombardment of Sebastopol was in progress Mr. de Burgh and Lord Cardigan rode up to the battery of siege guns and strolled in to see what was happening.

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Several other people dropped in out of curiosity to see the guns in action. Among them was Mr. William Howard Russell the war correspondent of the *Times* of London, who was extremely unpopular with the military authorities. When he arrived, he had been greeted by General Pennefather with the words, "I'd as soon see you as the devil," but after that no one attempted to get him sent home or to prevent him rambling about wherever he chose.

While William Howard Russell, Lord Cardigan, Mr. de Burgh, and several other persons were strolling in the battery and examining the great guns they were joined by an officer of Engineers. He saw nothing strange in the presence of a group of unknown and partly civilian spectators during a bombardment of enormous importance and indeed explained the firing plan to them.

"Ah," said Lord Cardigan, "I see. Those fellows below are our men and they are firing at the Russians. Those fellows who are firing towards us are the Russians. Why don't we drive them away?"

To this simple question, however, the officer of Engineers made no reply.

Lady Errol

A NUMBER of women marched with the army. These were not soldiers' wives, who traditionally followed the army, but wives of officers. These ladies were inspired partly by affection for their husbands, but also by the desire for excitement and adventure. Lady Errol, wife of Lord Errol, a captain in the 60th Rifles, embarked on the transport with her husband. She wore a costume which was much admired. It was a long flowing riding habit with a swallow-tail coatee adorned with rows of large, handsome, and shining buttons and a large plumed hat. She brought her French maid with her.

When the army landed in the Crimea and began the march to the Alma she rode with the troops. The day was overpoweringly hot, water was short, and dysentery was rife. Soon her horse was festooned with rifles of men who were overcome with heat and thirst and could no longer carry them, while others dragged themselves along with a

hand on her horse. During the campaign she shared a tent with her husband, but there was only one bed. Years later one of her grandchildren asked her if the bed had been comfortable.

"I don't know, my dear," she said; "his Lordship had the bed and I slept on the ground."

Lady Errol was a woman of very great courage. After the Alma there was some hesitation about carrying a flag of truce across to the Russian lines. Perhaps I should explain that in those days after an action it was customary to come forward with a flag of truce so that the dead might be buried. On this occasion there was some hesitation because it was felt that the Russians were not to be trusted, and it was Lady Errol in her bunched trailing riding habit and her plumed hat who walked across the battlefield carrying the flag of truce.

Besides people who came out for adventure there were others who were inspired by philanthropy or piety. No passports or permits were needed. Philanthropists, clergymen, doctors simply booked passages to the East and arrived to see what they could do to help. Doctor and Lady Alicia Blackwood, who ultimately worked with Florence Nightingale, came out without any plans just to see if they could make themselves useful; so did the Honorable and Reverend Sidney Godolphin Osborne, who became what Miss Nightingale called her chief of staff. Some clergymen of strong Protestant leanings came out to see that the troops were not influenced by Roman Catholics and some Roman Catholic clergy came out to see that the troops were not influenced by Protestants.

ALL this may seem to be very strange behavior but it was by no means confined to the British. The Russians were equally odd. The celebrated military historian Sir John Fortescue speaks of what he calls the "general insanity of the Crimea" and the phrase is just. Before the battle of the Alma the Russian commander in chief arranged a picnic party to view the action. The Alma is a position of extraordinary strength. Nature has reproduced on a gigantic scale the defenses laid

down in textbooks of military engineering. The River Alma has cut into hills, so that they rise in steep terraces, each approached by a precipitous slippery slope exactly like what military engineers call a glacis. The river Alma itself is a difficult river, swift and uneven in depth and below the terraces it has cut into the side of the hill to form a perpendicular wall. Such are the heights of the Alma.

On the top of the heights the Russian army stood, and they thought their position was impregnable. They did not believe men could be found to cross that river, and storm those heights. They would be swept by artillery fire from the moment they began to advance. If an attack was attempted certain destruction would be the result.

The Russian Ladies

SO PRINCE MENSCHIKOFF had invited thirty young ladies to come from Sebastopol and watch the destruction of the British army while eating a picnic luncheon. They were to be above, on the heights as if they were in a box at the theater, watching the battle below. It was a beautiful day and they came out in open carriages, with hampers and bottles of champagne, wearing light summer dresses and carrying parasols. Afterwards a Russian officer described how much the girls admired the appearance of the British army as it marched across the plain below. The Russian army wore gray uniforms but the British infantry wore red, the masses of scarlet made brilliant patches of color while the white cross belts not only added to the effect but made the British soldier look taller and more formidable than his Russian antagonist. The Russian girls uttered cries of admiration as they watched the British army advance across the plain.

What followed was one of the great feats of British arms. The British troops did, in fact, accomplish the impossible, they stormed the heights of the Alma, and the picnic party fled leaving their champagne bottles, their hampers, and even their parasols behind them.

Perhaps the most celebrated young woman who looked on at the Crimean war was Mrs. Duberly, wife



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THE LAST ROMANTIC WAR

of Captain Duberly of the 8th Hus- sars. Mrs. Duberly left a Journal behind her from which her character emerges. It is really impossible not to like her. She was gay, good-tempered, and good-natured, vivacious, a superb horsewoman, she loved what she calls a lark. The adjective by which her contemporaries describe her is "dashing"—the dashing Mrs. Duberly. She had no permission to accompany her husband but she managed to get herself on board a transport and her favorite horse as well. She was a center of joking and larking. Her presence could not be concealed, and when the time came to embark for action in the Crimea, Lord Lucan, the general in command of the cavalry division, ordered that she was not to go any farther.

However she had made friends with Lord Cardigan and with his help she managed to travel on still in an Army troopship. Lord Cardigan was brigadier under Lord Lucan but he took no notice of his superior officer's orders. Mrs. Duberly disguised herself as a Turkish woman and with her face swathed up in a yashmak was smuggled on board. Lord Lucan was prowling up and down the quayside looking out for her but failed to see through her disguise. This was the best lark of all. She writes gleefully that Lord Lucan was taken in because he was looking for a lady.

MRS. DUBERLY provoked a great deal of gossip, and if very unkind things were said about her, it is not difficult to understand why. But, with all her indiscretions, she was gay and good-tempered and generous, and it is pleasant to read in some manuscript letters written by Lieutenant Seager of the 8th Hus- sars, later Lieutenant General Edward Seager C.B., that, in his opinion, she was misunderstood. She was really very kind, he wrote, but people thought the worst because she had a free manner. When she reached Balaclava she lived on a gov- ernment ship in the harbor, coming ashore every day to see her husband and riding with him on patrols. Letters written by her husband's brother officers contain frequent refer- ences to warm clothing and food presented by her.

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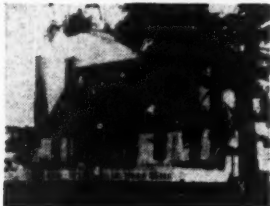
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Thirty Years (Little, Brown, \$5) is a book of J. P. Marquand's articles and stories. Most of them are about the Wars and the Army, Harvard and Boston, a New England prep school, the Far East, marriage, and the Mulligatawny Club, an American enclave in the Bahamas. The earliest stories—"Good Morning, Major," "High Tide," "Rainbows"—are very bad but very interesting, since they show you a Marquand who had not yet become the skillful, attractively mannered creator of *Ming Yellow* and Mr. Moto. Marquand is a reporter, a good reporter, with troubles of his own, bad troubles: since as a general thing the troubles get into the fiction and not into the articles, the fiction has underneath it a personal compulsion—that of a wish-fantasy, a day-dream, a nightmare—that the mild objective articles lack. The Marquand of the articles is usually not much more than a competent, sensible, pleasant photographer, though occasionally there is an arresting detail of the world, an engaging splinter of Marquand's own carefully wooden and commonplace and representative being. When, at Iwo Jima, all the amphibious vehicles leave the LSTs, Marquand thinks that "it's like all the cats in the world having kittens." The wife of the governor of Acension Island says to him: "Oh, hardly. Hugo and I are never lonely. . . . And then Hugo is governor of St. Helena. We spend six months there. It's very gay in St. Helena." And when Marquand tells the story of Paul and Virginia to an angry general to get the general to drink a bottle of Scotch, he is at his most charming: great, and very graceful, are the uses of culture.

A man, to Marquand, is a nexus of institutions, the half-unwilling, half-imaginary point at which Harvard, the Stock Exchange, and the Army intersect. He has one soldier say: "You're not in school any longer. Can't you forget it?" The other answers, *à la* Marquand: "Why should I? I'm always thinking about school"; and the first soldier reflects that war is like school, wonders whether "school and war do not go to-

gether." Marquand himself says in a speech: "Most people obviously believe that Harvard is the greatest and freest institution in the world," and finishes the speech with: "Let us not say it elsewhere, but perhaps we all are more fascinating and a little better than other people." This was said with a smile, and with a grain of irony, and to an audience a little better for it than other people, an audience of Harvard men, but Marquand's heart was in what he said. He is in love with—or anyway, married to—the institutions of this world, and that is why he can observe them so carefully: he has, by now, all the grounds for the divorce he will never quite get, all the facts for the biography he will never quite write except in its authorized form; and when, in the end, he is laid away, by school-fellows, he will be able to remember in detail everything that he is missing.

And how easily he might have missed it all! how easily America, with all its buffalo and Elks and Indians, might not have had any Oxford, any *Académie Française*, any *Almanach de Gotha* for Marquand to observe! If you reply, like James or Hawthorne, that America doesn't have them for Marquand or anybody else to observe, there is always the retort: "And what's wrong with Harvard and the National Academy of Arts and Letters and the Social Register?"—the retort, "And what's wrong with the Pentagon, the Senate, and General Motors?" No, the institutions are here for him to observe, and he is inside them observing: to Marquand there is something romantic, something miraculous, about both facts. As for the men whose shadows these institutions are—the men who make and break states, corporations, and academies—in Marquand's books they are a little gray, a little ghostly, except in so far as their organizations give them bone and hue.

But it is romantic, miraculous almost, that Marquand should be here, straight out of *The Age of Innocence*, to observe this new age of adjusting to one's group, and sharing the experience of one's generation, and getting divorced

"Education makes people easy to lead, but difficult to drive; easy to govern, but impossible to enslave."—LORD BROUGHAM

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because the president of one's corporation doesn't approve of one's wife, and all the rest of it. Why doesn't General Motors give Marquand a few hundred thousand dollars, keep him around the office—the offices—for a year or two, and then let him write the great American novel, about General Motors? Of course, it would be the same novel he's always written, but that's all right too, isn't it?—what's good enough for the rest of the country is good enough for General Motors.

As a writer Marquand is somewhat short on talent, imagination, brute ability, but is long on care, observation, directed curiosity, and is longest of all on personal involvement, subjective compulsion. Most of his books, under their veneer of patiently observed objective detail, seem versions of the same subjective fable, one designed to say to him and also to us: "You were right to do as you did; or if not right, still, you had no choice; or if you had a choice, still, it's the choice all of us necessarily make wrong: life's life. If only—but it doesn't matter. And . . . and it was all so long ago." The fable is told in a series of flashbacks, of sighs as elegiac, nostalgic, and wistfully submissive—as mannered and unvarying—as a Puccini opera. These flashbacks are not optional technique, but compulsory content: because of them the hero never has to make, in close-up, a clear choice to kiss or kill—the choices are always obscured by the haze of the past, of rueful and lyric recollection.

At the proper distance of time everything looks inevitable: we do not judge, but feel about, what we did, and the possibility of doing or choosing differently seems naïve, one more of youth's illusions. A Marquand character says: "I was faced by one of those uncomfortable moments of illumination when life is clear and simple, and, consequently, grim." But usually, to a Marquand character, life is obscure and complicated, and, consequently, elegiac. Marquand characters—the "real" Marquand characters, those we think like Marquand—love nothing so much as saying: "No matter how you try, you can't really understand anything; no matter what you do, you can't really change anything." Marquand's coat of arms ought to have in the middle a man saying *It doesn't matter* because it matters so much that there is nothing else for him to say.

THIS "real" Marquand character is the hero of the books' persistent fable. A man a little different—and consequently a little on the outside—looks with half-superior, half-inferior understanding at those entirely un-different others who *are* the inside. This man has a chance to break out of it all and be a different failure: a female chance, generally, one as mesmeric and unreliable as life; and he refuses this chance, or accepts it only to regress, as soon as

he gets a chance to be the same success the others are: a female chance, generally, as monotonous and inescapable as life. Lying alongside Eve's spare necessary shape, the man dreams of the Lilith he left—and, waking in the darkness, he sighs that he was right to leave her, and that life is life.

Browning said, "The sin I impute to each frustrate ghost / Is the unlit lamp and the ungirt loin"; we learn from Marquand that it wasn't a sin but a necessary evil. No wonder that our age and nation and species are grateful to him! Besides, there has always been something attractive about Marquand: we like somebody who succeeds with such bad conscience, and who seems to wish that he had had the nerve to be a failure or, better still, something to which the terms *success* and *failure* don't apply—as when Mallory said, about Everest: "Success is meaningless here." This small uneasy institution set down at the intersection of so many great ones, this little newsstand among the skyscrapers, looking up at them with a wistful accepting sigh—what if he *has* made as much money as some of them? It isn't money that is the legal tender of our dreams: the dreamer would trade all his royalty statements for one thaler of fairy gold. We leave Marquand with one of his own sighs: if only his good angel had been a person, and not an institution. . . .

Immortal Masterpiece

THE concluding volumes of Toynbee's *A Study of History* (Oxford, 4 vols., \$35) have at last been published. I never dreamed of owning any, and now four, patriarchal in gold and black and wine buckram, sit before me as I write: if I owned all ten I would sit inside them like St. Jerome, and not be seen by man for months. I began reading *A Study of History* on a cold, snowy, Ohio evening in the year 1937, and I've been reading it, off and on, ever since. If reading Proust is the best of vocations, reading Toynbee is the most delightful of avocations. All the historians in Hell, from Herodotus to Spengler, have been spending their spare time, these last years, reading Toynbee; they say to the newly dead, "And Toynbee? You haven't read Toynbee!" For *A Study of History*, errors, idiosyncrasies, and all, is an immortal masterpiece. How I know this I don't know: the muse of history must have possessed me, since I am far too ignorant to make the judgment myself. No book convinces one better of one's own ignorance: I don't know enough to criticize it, don't know enough, really, to appreciate it.

But I love it just the same, and would give a good deal to convince those of you who haven't read it (and reading the one-volume condensation is no more like reading *it* than reading *Lamb's Tales* is like reading Shakespeare) of the



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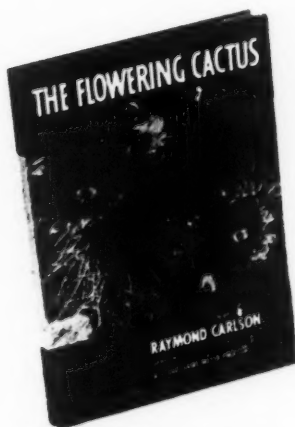
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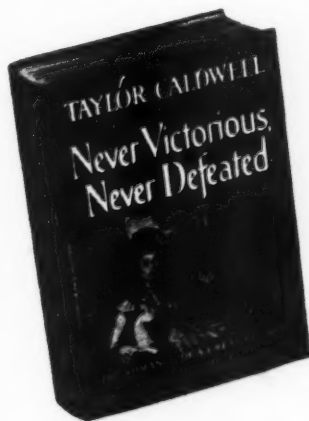
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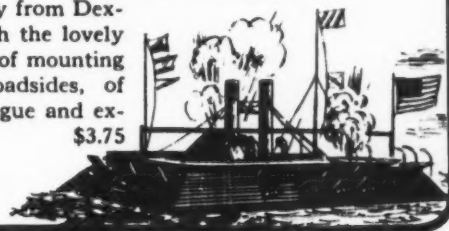
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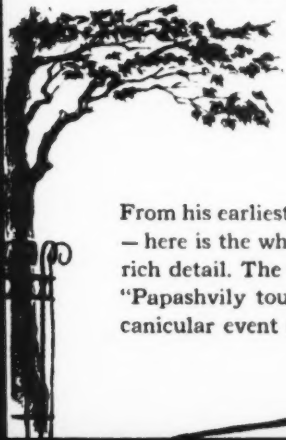
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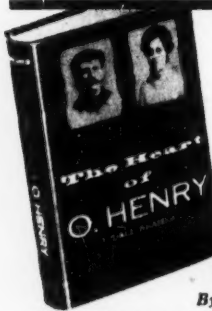
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voyages to Russia to dig up some buried treasure, is on a lower level—one reads it with much loyalty and some pleasure. But in the first half even the little poems are straight out of the sagas; Orm, tied, guarded, and about to be slaughtered, says to the other Vikings: *At home in the house/ That saw me grow/ Would I were seated now/ Eating sour milk and bread.* And this is how an invalid got his hair combed at Harald's court by Harald's daughter:

Ylva had some difficulty in attending to Orm, because he was unable to sit up, but she supported his body with her arm and used him carefully, and emerged from her task with credit, for he got no lye in his eyes or mouth and yet became clean and fine. Then she seated herself on the head of his bed, put his head between her knees, and began to comb him. She asked him if he was uncomfortable, but Orm had to admit that he was not. She found difficulty in passing the comb through his hair, for it was thick and coarse, and very tangled as a result of the washing; but she persevered patiently with the task, so that he thought he had never in his life been better combed.

. . . She drew her comb slowly through a tuft of Orm's hair which she had just untangled, and held it up against the daylight to examine it closely.

"I do not understand how this can be," she said, "but there does not appear to be a single louse in your hair."

"That is not possible," said Orm. "It must be a bad comb."

She said that it was a good louse-comb, and scraped his head so that his scalp burned, but still she could find no louse.

"If what you say is true, then I am sick indeed," said Orm, "and things are even worse than I had feared. This can only mean that my blood is poisoned."

The Collected Poems of Wallace Stevens (Knopf, \$7.50) contains all the poetry of one of the greatest of living poets. I have before this written about both his best poems and his worst, but on occasion (and a book like this is truly an occasion) a critic can behave like posterity, which memorializes—which memorizes—the good, and which looks by the bad with a sweet uncaring smile. One might as well argue with the

Evening Star as find fault with so much wit and grace and intelligence; such knowledge of, feeling for, other times and places, and our own; such an overwhelming and exquisite command both of the words and of the rhythms of our language; such charm and irony, such natural and philosophical breadth of sympathy, such dignity and magnanimity. (Toynbee often has the calm and generosity of a visitor from a better age, and you feel that Stevens would like nothing better than to be such a traveler through time.) Little of Stevens' work has the dramatic immediacy, the mesmeric, involving humanity, of so much of Yeats' and Frost's poetry: his poems, if they were ideally successful, might resemble the paintings of Piero della Francesca. But some of these cool, clear, airy poems, which tower above us in the dazzling elegance, the "minute brilliance," of yachts or clouds, ought to be sailing over other heads many centuries from now.

EVERELYN WAUGH is a man born to write *Candide*; and after he had written it and called it *Decline and Fall*—it is, surely, one of the funniest books in English—he went on writing and became at last a professional inventor of atrocities, a very witty, very sadistic-masochistic, and very unreliable one. The Waugh hero, characteristically, is a stiff, numb, gentlemanly lay-figure in the chamber of horrors of the Present, the torture chamber of the Future.

In *Tactical Exercise* (Little, Brown, \$3.75), the toccata which gives his new collection its name, Waugh tells the story of an orphan pyromaniac in the State of the Future. After burning down the air base at which he is stationed, he finds a loved home in the country manor, torn from a "maimed V.C.," which the State uses to rehabilitate its criminals. Unwillingly rehabilitated, he becomes an official in the Department of Euthanasia, the only institution which flourishes in that bad time; falls in love with a ballet dancer with a long golden beard, the result of the de-sexing operation which, as is customary, she has undergone. When she learns that, beard or no, she is about to have a baby, she has a second operation which removes beard and skin to-



The Swivel Chair

We spent a reasonable amount of school time studying American history as it has jelled, then much of our percipient lives thereafter amending and extending our grasp on the illusive fact and sustaining fictions of the past. The liveliest aid and challenge to this percipience encountered in many a publishing moon is the **Youth's Companion**. (\$6.00) With a camera dissolve into a more lucid looking-glass world we move backward in time through a coming-of-age century, keeping an eye on the children, on the crusades and crotchets of their elders, reading the writers who then felt only the first intimations of immortality — and what is more, reading them for content rather than form.

The quality that makes this book so much to so many, of course, is the commentary by the editor, **Lovell Thompson**. He is, in turn, lapidary as in this comment on a poem by Robert Frost called "Ghost House"; *In New England the vanished town is the victim of hope, in the West it is the victim of despair. In the moist East the forest quickly comes back to make a lesser wilderness for a later pioneer. In the West the dry walls stand as a warning to the next comers, preserved by the triumphant climate like an enemy scalp* or eloquent as in the following passage on an article by John James Audubon; *Audubon drew them with the divine greed of first possession, with the startled, joyous eye of sudden ownership. The birds were denizens of an Eden. The artist was an Adam who named them one by one with his pencil and his brush. In this last new world the creatures understood their part. Drawing after drawing bursts with the inspiration that unites the fact of life with the human logic of design and provocative; No one has ever really explored the question of just what happens when the men of an old world come to a new land and start social evolution over again, going, it seems, halfway back to the Indians and starting up the old ladder in a hurry.* Those who read this Companion of America's youth will find themselves in a new Wonderland of American writing.



Praise is not always as provocative as this of **Edward Newhouse** by Dylan Thomas. "If I were to receive in the same mail new books by the dozen

best writers of fiction in America, Edward Newhouse's would be the first I'd read. He does to me what the movies did when I was ten. More than anyone else on either side of the Atlantic, he makes me want to know what happens next. And when it happens, it happens to me." **The Temptation of Roger Heriott** (\$3.00) is a novel of a man living one generation late for the shock-absorbition of inherited money, and one marriage-remove from a growing Texas fortune. With a little boosting he has reached the \$10,000 level to find that the footing is insecure there. The power of this book lies in the sense of recognition that you will bring to Roger Heriott, his wife and his children, the recognition that though this is not your own story, it could be that of your oldest friend.



Esther Warner can write as she does, with revealing beauty of thought and phrase, because she listens with an inward ear to what people are trying to communicate. Her first book, *New Song in a Strange Land*, established a quietly resolute Warner cult among readers. This new book, **Seven Days to Lomaland**, takes up the tale in a week's walk through jungle with her Liberian friends, the men and women who worked for her and with her. She had set out reluctantly to attend a trial by ordeal but the pilgrimage is made rich with the lore of the African's world, illiterate and lyrical, primitive and sage. The first reviewer, Virginia Kirkus, said of it, "A book to green the landscape of the heart, universal and timeless." (\$3.50)



With all three of these books there has been a feeling that at the end of the book the story is continuing, that eventually there is more to be known, but in this fourth — **The Last Hunt** by **Milton Lott** (\$3.95) — there is a sense of absolute finality. This is one of America's hours of domestic disaster when the plains were dark with the useless blood of the buffalo. It takes a certain toughness of mind perhaps to move into this harsh landscape but of those who do venture it, probably no one will ever forget the dedicated fight of a young Indian for something worth his life and more, or the shock of one small terrible instance of punishment exactly befitting the crime. A Houghton Mifflin Literary Fellowship Award and one of the best of them.



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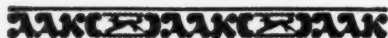
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THE NEW BOOKS

gether, replacing them by a plastic mask ideal as a base for grease-paint. That loved beard gone, the hero burns down the loved home-prison, killing all the criminals; and he himself, the only surviving example of rehabilitation, is sent out on a lecture tour with a pretty mistress.

In all these stories things go wrong—vulgarly, basely wrong—with a magician's ingenuity, a star's fidelity: the stew the natives feed the hero is, always, the heroine. The reader, instead of getting avidly indignant over the age, the State, and people, only says: "I know your methods, Waugh." Waugh writes as he does, not because the world is what it is, but because Waugh is what he is—another sign that he is a real writer. This book has little of his best writing, though "Work Suspended" is an attractive, unusually personal novelette. But in this world bursting with sin and sorrow, how can we spend our time licking our lips over the ingenious imaginary enormities that *bad* people keep showering on one gray guiltless figure? Waugh's moral imagination is so one-sided that it has become a crippled, macabre joke.

MOST of Russell Lynes' *The Tastemakers* (Harper, \$5) is a careful and interesting history, with fine illustrations, of American taste in houses, furniture, pictures, and sculpture, and of the people who made it what it was. (A favorite nineteenth-century way of getting a man to buy a chair was to call it *sincere*, something I didn't know and won't forget.) Lynes leaves out novels, poems, plays, music, dancing; this one-sided selection of facts makes his conclusions one-sided, I think. Part of *The Tastemakers* is his very well-known essay on Lowbrows, Middlebrows, and Highbrows. This is an essay I heartily enjoyed and thoroughly disbelieved. When you're told exactly what lowbrows, middlebrows, and highbrows eat, drink, love, think, and wear, you laugh and like it; but pretty soon you begin to notice that neither you nor I nor Russell Lynes—nor anybody else with any sense and opinions of his own—fits into the categories very well, and you decide that this pigeonholing is wit, not thought. We're always told, quite correctly, that we

must judge a man as a man, and not as a Negro, a Turk, or a Jew. To judge him as a lowbrow, a highbrow, a middlebrow—to force all that we can into one of these pigeonholes into which, after all, so little of a man will go—seems to me an analogous sin.

In the Galleys

I READ *The View from Pompey's Head* (Doubleday, \$3.95), like almost all these books, in galleys. (Galley are thirty-six, or forty-eight, or seventy-two inches long—they grew longer as I grew older. I thought of how Gilbert Highet, year in and year out, had dealt with these paper anacondas without a word, and it seemed to me that this department of Harper's should be called *The New Laocoon*.) Along with this proof there was a marvelous sentence: "This is Hamilton Basso's big novel, an important and extremely salable book that he has been on the verge of writing for the last decade and a half." I felt for Hamilton Basso, and for Hamilton Basso's publishers, and for the society which puts such sentences into people's heads—a society which Hamilton Basso views with a somewhat unacquiescing, somewhat Marquandish eye.

Pompey's Head is a small Southern city to which a New York lawyer in early middle age is summoned home by an unfortunate and unbelievable subplot about a Wolfe-ish writer whose wicked wife has accused a Perkins-ish publisher of Stealing Royalties. Pompey's Head, and the lawyer, and the girls he used to go with, and the little girl, grown now, whom he falls in love with, and the wife he left behind him, a clear, clean, crisp, Vassar, PTA, AAUW type calculated to scare Europe, Asia, and Africa into the middle of the Indian Ocean—all these are quite believable and rather interesting. This is a medium-sized novel, not a big one, but it is in a mild way enjoyable; you feel that it is, except for that subplot, the best its writer can do, and a decent enough thing to be doing, and you extend to it the qualified respect it deserves.

The *Huge Season* (Viking, \$3.75) is a much better book, and a much bigger disappointment. Wright

THE NEW BOOKS

Morris is a "real writer" in a way, to a degree, that Hamilton Basso never is: he knows a great deal more about just what people said and felt and did at a certain time, or would say and feel and do at any time, and he has more of a gift for words, more cultivation, more imagination. My wife and I read *The Huge Season* at the same time, and would read parts aloud to each other, ask *Where are you now?*, say, *Wait till you get to the chapter about So-and-So*: we were really interested—and, when we got to the end, really disappointed. The alternating chapters, one in the late '20s, the other in the early '50s, seem designed to lead up to some revelation which will explain and justify everything, and so end the book. But though the book pretends to End, it only stops: instead of a revelation there is only (as Wells said) a mouse on the altar, and a queer, hysterical, writer-ish little mouse at that.

But I hope that such news of the end won't keep anybody from reading the book: it is, most of the time, an appealing story by a talented and attractive writer. There is something engaging and shelterable about him, so that you want to spread your wings over his faults or, at least, run off into a hedge to draw the hunters away from them. His characters, except for the author-character, are not a lot more than skin deep; some of the book is romantic and confused, about liberals, Hemingway heroes, and the '20s, in a partly touching, partly distressing way: its author, in spite of his real talents, is a little commonplace, a little lacking in personal force, unintended individuality. But just the same, read the book: the best parts are fresh and live enough to make the worst parts an honorable disappointment.

Literature, Now and Then

FIRST one gets works of art, then criticism of them, then criticism of the criticism, and, finally, a book on *The Literary Situation* (Viking, \$3.75), a book which tells you all about writers, critics, publishing, paper-backed books, the tendencies of the (literary) time, what sells and how much, what writers wear and drink and want, what their wives wear and drink and want, and so on.

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BOOKS IN BRIEF

Malcolm Cowley has plainly enjoyed writing his—as a review would say—readable, informative, and entertaining book: his style, which is usually rather doughy and matter-of-course, is in this book a good deal more animated. *The Literary Situation* is less objective than its informing, summarizing manner would indicate—its author would give all that he has, and more, to get us back to the '20s and '30s, times when he swam more freely in a tide running his own way. His book rather depressed me, since it is such a thoroughgoing example of what Tocqueville called—Cowley quotes the sentence—"the trading spirit in literature."

ONE of the most popular sorts of science-fiction, these last few years, has been the cautionary Utopia. *The Big Ball of Wax* (Simon & Schuster, \$3.50) shows you a society which is all business, advertising, and "mass entertainment media," and shows you what happens to it when something is invented which allows you not simply to see, but to be, the television program you are watching. Shepherd Mead's book is sometimes quite funny and sometimes quite crude; the best thing about it is his vivid and detailed knowledge—he is a vice president—of business ways and advertising speech.

ALFRED DUGGAN'S *Leopards and Lilies* (Coward-McCann, \$3.50) is the competent and well-informed, moderately interesting, somewhat unimaginative history of an awful woman and a nice soldier in the days of bad King John. After Merle Miller's *Reunion* (Viking, \$3.95), I welcomed it. *Reunion* is the book you would get if you put in Mammoth Cave, to write a novel, every radio- and television- and scenario-writer who ever lived. As you read it you begin to have the nightmarish feeling that sensibility and morality, nice people, good writers, are simply a fable agreed upon, a myth the Real World doesn't believe in any longer.

FROM EMERSON to Twain, most of our great American writers wrote, and wrote well, for *The Youth's Companion* (Houghton Mifflin, \$6); the extremely interesting new anthology of their contributions is

alloyed by the extensive comments of the editor, Lovell Thompson, who writes about them in patronizing magazine-ese. *The Saturday Evening Post Treasury* (Simon & Schuster, \$7.50), though it contains a number of good things, gets worse, gets almost indistinguishably commonplace, as it approaches the '50s. It seemed to me that the articles written for those dead children who read *The Youth's Companion* were usually more thoughtful and demanding, and of more literary merit, than the articles written for the grownups who read the *Post* today.

BOOKS IN BRIEF

By Katherine Gauss Jackson

FICTION

The Bridge Over the River Kwai, by Pierre Boulle.

This novel, which won the Prix St. Beuve in France, is the story of a group of British soldiers—particularly of a certain Colonel Nicholson—who were, in 1942, prisoners of the Japanese in Siam, near the Burmese border. Its drama and conflict lie in the fact that these well disciplined and technically able men were set to building a bridge to carry supplies for the enemy. How several of them resolved this conflict—some remaining rigidly faithful to the conventional army regulations, some turning to follow what seemed to them a higher human standard—makes a story of the most intense excitement, both in the narrative and in the psychological sense. A memorable novel, brilliantly conceived and brilliantly written.

Vanguard, \$3

Good Morning, Miss Dove, by Frances Gray Patton.

An influential teacher is almost as inevitable a part of the past of most Americans as youth itself. Perhaps that is what accounts for the overwhelming success here—as in England—of such stories as *Goodbye, Mr. Chips* and this October choice of the Book-of-the-Month Club. One finds the atmosphere of the classroom so nostalgic and familiar that the humor seems funnier, the senti-

BOOKS IN BRIEF

ment more real and less cloying than in other settings. This is the story of the geography teacher who has (without benefit of modern theories) taught a rigid deportment as well as her subject to two generations of the small town of Liberty Hill. It is told mostly in flashbacks that begin the day Miss Dove is stricken with paralysis at the end of one of her classes and it is full of laughter-through-tears humor that ensnares even those who find themselves fighting it as I did. Miss Dove is the re-creation of a character known to us all.

Dodd-Mead, \$2.75

No Time for Sergeants, by Mac Hyman.

Another hill-billy—one of the dead-pan innocents—gets drafted and proceeds to get into one "hilarious" scrape after another. I put hilarious in quotes because so many people have been almost hysterically amused by the book, and I just am not. I realize the difficulties in writing a whole book about a fellow in the Air Force who is continually being made the butt of situations that he—because he is such a nice guy—never realizes are deliberately set up to trap him and which half the time come out, of course, in his favor. But after the first few episodes, I got the pitch and smiled less often. I never got involved. But humor is quite unpredictable, and then there was once a book called *Deve Mable*, about another war, whose tone was much the same, which I thought was very funny indeed. A first novel and a Book-of-the-Month Club selection along with *Good Morning, Miss Dove*.

Random House, \$2.95

Madame de —, by Louise de Vilmorin. Translated by Duff Cooper. "Whenever love touches history, events of the past belong to the present. . . ." So begins this delightfully French, delightfully witty, fake-nineteenth century story of love and love's intrigues and a pair of much-pawned diamond earrings in the shape of hearts. It has already been made into a French movie with Charles Boyer, under the direction of Max Ophuls. A most absorbing, romantic fifty-four pages.

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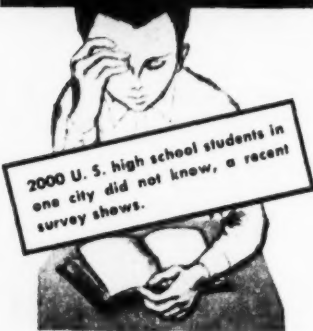
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BOOKS IN BRIEF

NON-FICTION

Sweet and Sour, by John O'Hara. A lead-off about Hemingway in one of these collected literary columns starts Mr. O'Hara objecting to what he calls "chatter columnists"—the ones who call Hemingway Papa, or Pops, or Hemingstein, or "the old bloke" and who are always quoting letters from him. But actually in this group of his pieces from the Trenton *Times-Advertiser* Mr. O'Hara does some pleasant literary chattering himself. Whether he is writing about automobiles, books about Harry Luce's domain, Aldous Huxley, publishers, authors, and reviewers generally, or simply going on about the number of people whose name is Mudd (repeat, Mudd) he makes very pretty and often happily impertinent talk about the literary scene and its peripheries. Random House, \$3

Free Love and Heavenly Sinners, by Robert Shaplen.

The story that Mr. Shaplen retells here—the love affair between the beloved Brooklyn pastor and country-wide evangelist, Henry Ward Beecher, and his devout parishioner, Elizabeth Tilton, wife of his dear friend—rocked the country in the 1870s. "Lib" Tilton had confessed her adultery to her husband during the summer of that year. It is still a lurid tale, documented with the letters and clippings and court records all written in the elaborate language of the times. Perhaps for that reason Mr. Shaplen's spinning out and elucidation of the story seem overlong and occasionally overwritten. The pathos and scandal of the affair are built in and need no pointing up. It is useful and informative to have the story set against the background of the contemporary controversial feminist movement, but sometimes the militant ladies take over the foreground and the central story fades away. Knopf, \$3.95

Adventures in Politics, by Richard L. Neuberger. Oxford, \$3.50

Guide to Politics 1954, edited by Quincy Howe and Arthur M. Schlesinger, Jr. Dial, \$2.50

Readers who discovered these two books about a month or so before the elections, when they were pub-

lished, were fortunate. But although both of them are full of lively discussion on the most current issues and candidates, there is so much in them of basic permanent interest to anyone who cares about the American political scene that they make valuable reference books for any library. The first is a personal story. Mr. Neuberger (whose writings are known to *Harper's* readers) and his wife are both members of the Oregon State Legislature. He tells in detail and through their own experiences of the strengths and weaknesses of state governments; of specific issues he and his wife have defended or fought against; of advantages and disadvantages coming to the private citizen who wants to go into politics. A useful book and a heartening story. . . . The other, the Guide, is more specifically a handbook. In Part I such "liberals" as Mrs. Franklin D. Roosevelt, Averell Harriman, Wayne Morse, Herbert Lehman, and nine others discuss current issues—the H-bomb, labor and management, the U.S. and the U.N., McCarthyism, etc. Part II tells how American politics work and how the citizen can work in them. In Part III Louis H. Bean does a forecast of the 1954 elections; and the last part of the book is given over to voting records and election statistics. Unless we make the unlikely assumption that this is our last election under the present system, these books should have a long and useful life.

Higher Than the Sky, by Frances Crammer Greenman.

I've painted 1,000 portraits in almost every state in the Union. I've painted men and women, drunk and sober, children who upchucked over their best dresses at the sight of me, bankers, governors, movie stars, and pretty ladies who cried into their real pearl necklaces. I love work. I love people. As Buddy Rogers said to me that New Year's Eve backstage, "Everybody's nice when you get to know them—even Stokowski." But for those who came in late I take it all back to the beginning.

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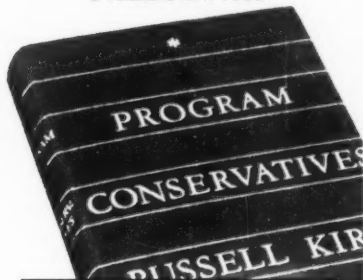
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BOOKS IN BRIEF

unsympathetic time and place dared to go out and stump for women's rights. How from such a background the daughter came to be a most urbane and worldly portrait painter is an entertaining story, full of things seen and felt in a life of most varied experience—all told with the immediacy and nearly overwhelming zest of the paragraph quoted above. One gets a little breathless but reads with pleasure. Harper, \$1

The Bafut Beagles, by Gerald M. Durrell.

For *Harper's* readers this book needs nothing but a mention of its existence under this different title. Three sections of it have just appeared in the magazine as "The King and His Beasts." The book contains more of the same kind of delightful narrative about Mr. Durrell's adventures in the Cameroons, collecting animals with the help of the Fon of Bafut. Viking, \$3.75

FORECAST

Book Club Choices

The Literary Guild and the Book of the Month have made their final choices for the year. The former has chosen for December *Mr. Maugham Himself*, a collection of Mr. Maugham's works edited by *John Beecroft* and published by Doubleday. The Book of the Month's December choice is *Song of the Sky* by *Guy Murchie* (Houghton-Mifflin). Looking into 1955 it has also chosen *The Cornerstone*, a novel by *Zoé Oldenbourg* (Pantheon) for January.

January Motley

A few of the other January highlights are beginning to be announced. From Rinehart will come *The Susquehanna*, a new one in the Rivers of America series, by *Carl Carner*, and *The Sane Society* by *Erich Fromm*. From Greystone will come *Richard Aldrich's* story of his marriage to Gertrude Lawrence—617 manuscript pages and lots of pictures. Dutton announces *Prisoner's Bluff* by *Rolf Magener*, a great success in England; Farrar, Straus and Young will publish a new novel by *Alberto Moravia*, *A Ghost at Noon*; and World announces *Simone de Beauvoir's* "startling new novel"—as yet untitled.

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THE NEW RECORDINGS

Trade-Ins

Edward Tatnall Canby

ALMOST every camera owner has spent a while window-shopping among the thousands of used items of photographic equipment that are displayed tantalizingly in every camera store, in photographic bargain catalogues, and in magazine and newspaper ads. Generally speaking, it is as safe now to buy guaranteed used camera equipment, reconditioned, as to acquire it brand new at higher prices. Photographic equipment generally has a long useful life, is basically non-obsolete except in relatively minor details; and photographers, looking for greener grasses, are notoriously ready to trade in their stuff for new at the slightest impulse. The camera divorce rate is profitably high.

Substitute the words, "high fidelity," for each "camera" or "photographic," above, and you will read a startling paragraph, one that until this fall nobody could have written or thought of in public. There was no secondhand hi-fi market. But there should be, for exactly parallel reasons and—now that somebody has thought of it—there will be.

Last month Hudson Radio & Television Corp., of New York City and mail-order, announced a trade-in policy on hi-fi separate-unit equipment, not merely an "allowance" for inducement but a serious, large-value bid, entailing the prospect of reselling your equipment as guaranteed-used. The Audio Exchange of Long Island City has been sending out flyers on used equipment and taking trade-ins for some time, but this is the first occasion I've heard of where a major hi-fi outlet has adopted the policy. Of course, others will too, inevitably, now that the ice is broken.

It is odd that heretofore nothing of the sort has happened. Perhaps there wasn't yet enough equipment floating around. There is, now. Possibly the sales people were putting it off as long as they could, having enough headaches already.

It's especially odd in view of the fact that the separate-unit ("component") hi-fi equipment makers have always been pointing out the

long useful life of their amplifiers and speakers and radio tuners, and their low obsolescence compared to the brief life-span of most standard radios, phonographs, and TV sets. Yet not once, to my knowledge, has the obvious corollary, trade-ins, been explored in these last seven or eight years of hi-fi progress. Now that it has begun it cannot end.

A HEALTHY side-result of the used-equipment boom will be in the much-neglected repair-service area. Each hi-fi store that takes equipment in trade will soon have an experienced repair staff to restore these items to salability. In no time at all, then, there will grow up a backlog of experience that should, at last, bring repair services—if and when—to the thousands of equipment owners who now simply hope that nothing will go wrong with

Recent Toscanini Releases

Verdi: Falstaff (NBC Symphony Broadcast, 1950). RCA Victor LM 6111 (3).

The complete 1950 broadcast from Studio 8H—evidently with some corrective added reverberation, for excellent hi-fi sound.

Toscanini Conducts Wagner (Concert excerpts from five operas: Siegfried Idyll). RCA Victor LM 6020 (2).

A collection, some items not before heard.

Schubert: Symphony #9. Schubert, the Man, by André Maurois. RCA Victor LM 1835.

A new recording to replace the old T. version; bound in booklet by Maurois.

Toscanini Plays Your Favorites (Rom. Carn. Ov., Zampa Ov., Dance of the Hours, Finlandia, Emont Ov., Brahms Hung. Dances). RCA Victor LM 1834.

All the above with the now-defunct NBC Symphony.



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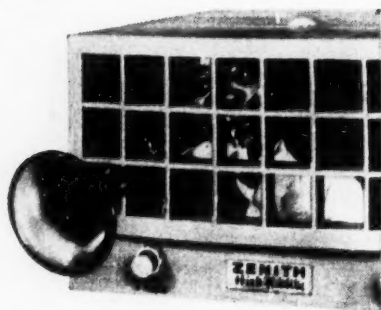
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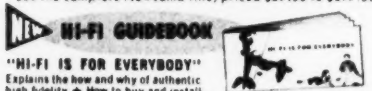


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RCA-Reiner-Strauss

Strauss: Ein Heldenleben. Chicago Symphony, Reiner. RCA Victor LM 1807.

I HAVE never been as fascinated by any Strauss performance as by this and the following—and I am usually no enthusiast for the big Strauss tone poems. I begin to understand why. Many people take a quick dislike to music that sounds "overblown," too fat, too rich, too cloying, too emotional. But old Strauss was a lot subtler than other conductors know: aside from its extreme length and the unconscionable time it takes a'dying, this performance shows not one trace of overblown emotionalism. Throughout it is lean, vivid, sharp, clear, beautifully molded (if at a characteristically leisurely pace—quite acceptable now via LP), astonishingly colorful. It is, moreover, remarkably introspective, thoughtful, dissonant, psychological.

All of which we can chalk up to a triple-team, *RCA, Reiner, Strauss*, or if you wish, *Strauss, Reiner, RCA*. This is an absolutely astonishing recording, no less. It has the full range of "hi-fi" sounds, transcendently, to please tin and golden ears alike. It is incredibly well recorded—not with any sort of natural concert sound, but with that new and unique reproduced-music effect that could exist in no concert hall nor should; in this case it brings out a miraculous wealth of plastic Straussian detail such as is seldom heard by any "live" audience, the veritable living insides of a masterful piece of music and of sheer orchestration.

Living, plastic? That aspect is due to Fritz Reiner, perhaps the greatest Strauss conductor alive. This razor-edge combination of lean, hard clarity on a vast orchestral scale and perilously high-tension emotionalism is exactly suited to his disciplined directing. Many—most—other conductors miss it dismally and their orchestras wallow in Strauss (to many people's delight, granted—but this is better!).

The early virtuoso retrospection of this work (fifty years before Strauss's death)—in which he engagingly quotes at length from his other tone poems—is bracketed in this series of recordings by—

Strauss: Also Sprach Zarathustra. Salome; Dance of the Seven Veils. Chicago Symphony, Reiner. RCA Victor LM 1806.

The first item is two years earlier than "Heldenleben," the second seven years later and clean out of the tone-

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poem period, into our own century. Same extraordinary performing and recording. (Notice especially the splendid brass, the natural percussion, the smooth strings—where so many high records make them unnaturally rough in sound—the fully-ripened climaxes, remarkably undistorted, and, over the whole, a fine rich liveness that balances the array of detail into the unity of orchestral and musical sound that *must* be present. It often is lost.)

"Also Sprach" ("Thus Spake") is a more sententious, less personal work than "Heldenleben," less enjoyable to the anti-bombast folk; you won't find it more effectively done than here, even so. The "Salome" excerpt has had many lush renditions; this brings again the combination of those extraordinarily vivid inner details and the clean high tension of the music itself under Reiner.

Mercury-Dorati

Bartok: Concerto for Orchestra. Minneapolis Symphony, Dorati. Mercury MG 50033.

The now-essential close teamwork between composer, conductor, and recording technicians is shown in another facet in this continuing series of Dorati recordings for Mercury. The "Living Presence" recording technique undeniably assembles formidable technical prowess: unusual clarity in the strong transients of brass, cymbals, and, especially, percussion, where Mercury drums sound bigger and sharper than most; a large dynamic range, aided by virtually noise-free surfaces, without the annoying "echoes" of some LP records. But mike-placing in the past has been ultra-close, to the point of unmusical exaggeration of close-up detail in a closet-like and lifeless background.

The Bartok score is unique, a big-orchestra work that, even beyond Strauss, specifically directs the attention to orchestral details, to pairs of clarinets, oboes, trumpets, the whole gamut of orchestral color—an ideal score for modern recording technique. The old pre-tape Reiner version gives it the proper close-to-treatment; later versions have mistakenly reproduced a "Romantic," over-all distant sound, losing the instrumental detail in the whole. Mercury, at last, brings the concerto right up close and, instrumentally, the look inside this score is fascinating under conditions of such extraordinary technical clarity. But—

What of the conductorial element? It is a shame that Mercury found Dorati at hand for so many of its definitive (or would-be definitive) technical jobs. For this ear, at least, Dorati is a competent technician who can make an orchestra

play with physical accuracy and cohesive ness; in some familiar scores, especially in ballet ("Nutcracker," for instance) the sound is musical. But in many another there is a hard, unmusical quality that extends, with a vengeance, to this reading.

Every note is there and the whole is as mechanically perfect as it is musically coarse and unexpressive. Remarkable! How can one pin down this quality, for those who may think otherwise? The evidence is intuitive and at the same time it is in a million details, instantaneously passing. No short written review can do more than put down the conclusion: a most unmusical performance (though well conceived stylistically) of a sensitive and great modern score.

Schubert: Symphony #8, "Unfinished."
Tchaikovsky: "Romeo and Juliet." Chicago Symphony, Dorati. Mercury MG 50037.

SAME recording technique—the most powerful and the best recording of the "Unfinished" to date—and similar conclusions. Here the trouble can be more easily heard by most ears. Mr. Dorati has re-interpreted the Schubert to bring the two movements into "more equitable and expressive dynamic relationship"—possibly a worthy project for a more serious reading; but one hears in this version merely a very loud playing of the *tutti* parts of the second movement, a somewhat subdued emphasis on the same in the first, and neither contributes anything to the essential music itself, which is grossly unphrased, unpoetic, insensitive, whether loud or soft.

There are moments of beauty, when Mercury's wonderful sound combines momentarily with beautiful playing by this or that group of orchestral personnel (the same who play for Reiner in the RCA Strauss series); but what is evidently the conductor's insistent hand too often intrudes upon these passages with an ugly, a hurried, a blatant passage of sheer physical noise.

The less difficult and showier "Romeo" music is more satisfactory, generally speaking; but many of us will find the same lacks here, hi-fi sound or no.

Miscellany

Mr. Strauss Comes to Boston. (Johann Strauss selections). Boston Pops Orch., Fiedler. RCA Victor LM 1809.

THE material on the jacket and liners of this release is more interesting than the record itself—an illustrated account of the fabulous "Peace Jubilee" of 1872 in Boston, where Johann Strauss guest-conducted. Believe it or not, in that horse-and-buggy and wood-burning



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steam locomotive era twenty thousand singers sang together for the Jubilee chorus, and the assembled orchestra numbered one thousand players; Strauss needed a hundred assistant conductors to keep the great assemblage together in the "Blue Danube" and other compositions. A "bouquet" of one hundred and fifty prominent singers performed *en masse* various solo vocal numbers; Gounod's "Ave Maria" was sung by fifty soprano soloists with a hundred solo violins, *obligato*!

The recording has a selection of Strauss items played during the Jubilee, including the Jubilee Waltz, but the performers number merely the normal orchestral complement. High Fidelity takes up the slack and my only complaint is that the interpretations are brittle, brilliant, dazzling, not at all Viennese or, for that matter, proper-Bostonian. The sound is strictly modern and there's a touch of Hollywood in it. Entrancing reproductions of the original 1872 programs, tickets, badges, ads.

A Leroy Anderson "Pops" Concert. Leroy Anderson and His "Pops" Orch. Decca DL 9749.

ODDLY enough, this man from Boston comes much nearer to the spirit of our olden times in his newly-written music than the Boston Pops' recreation. Pretty low-brow stuff, but there is a buoyant, uncomplicated melodiousness about Anderson's little pieces that is old-fashioned in the nicest way, a reminiscent mixture of the turn-of-the-century, flavored with Mendelssohn, Delibes, Offenbach, Sousa, and perhaps a bit of the lightest of Rossini. Only an irrepressible streak of practical jokery (and a touch of ballroom jazz now and then) snaps us into the nerveless twentieth century; Anderson's snappiest in this disc (there are numerous others) is a typewriter song, complete with typewriter, a real one. You can even hear an envelope being addressed, with music. Nice recording but Decca's surfaces are still substandard.

Liszt: Dante Fantasia; Sonata in B Minor; shorter pieces. Orazio Frugoni, piano. Vox PL 8800.

PERHAPS this had better be left unmentioned—but the issuance by a reputable company of such an incredibly bad performance as this is a challenge to any conscientious critic. Perhaps many will enjoy Frugoni; he has ten extremely agile fingers and plenty of arm muscle. But that such a travesty of music could even be played, let alone recorded, is a commentary on musical taste today. Or am I just Johnny-out-of-step? Try it yourself.

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HARPER & BROTHERS (a Corporation)
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